

# BOLETIN ECLESIASTICO de FILIPINAS

THE OFFICIAL INTERDIOCESAN BULLETIN

**ECHARISTIC CONGRESSES AND OUR  
NATIONAL ECHARISTIC YEAR**

**Josefino Ramirez, H.P.**

**THE CENTRAL PLACE  
OF THE ECHARIST**

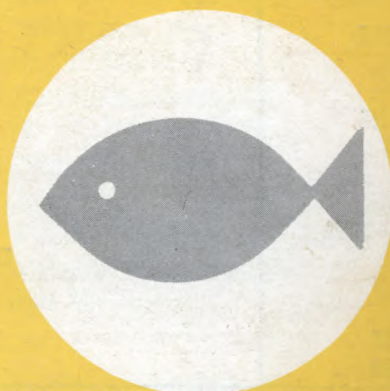
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**ECUMENICAL DIMENSIONS  
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**LOCAL LEGISLATION  
ON THE HOLY ECHARIST**

**Florencio Testera, O.P.**



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# LORENZO RUIZ

## and companions

### SAINTS FOR THE FILIPINOS AND THE WORLD

The bright news that has come out lately in the papers along with the depressing news of war, betrayals, plunder, killings and other criminalities, is the news on the canonization of Blessed Lorenzo Ruiz and his companions. This bit of news comes like the proverbial breath of fresh air in a smog-laden world. It is the most hopeful news that has come like a bright light that has pierced the desolateness and drabness of our world.

The world of Christendom, once more, has a very good reason for jubilation. The good tidings have a special significance to Filipinos, for among those to be raised to the altars of sainthood are men and women of tremendous courage, of unwavering faith and love of God, all witnesses to the love of God, and all coming from this small corner of the earth, the Philippines. To wit: Fr. Antonio Gonzalez, O.P. (Spaniard), rector and professor of theology; Fr. Domingo Ibañez de Erquicia, O.P. (Spaniard), professor of theology; Fr. Lucas del Espiritu Santo, O.P. (Spaniard), professor of philosophy; Fr. Guillaume Courtet,



O.P. (French), professor of theology; Fr. Thomas Hioji de San Jacinto, O.P. (Japanese), student of theology; all from the Colegio de Santo Tomas, now better known as the University of Santo Tomas.

Travelling with these apostles of the faith in that mission to Japan were two Dominican lay brothers, and two Japanese women-novices of the Third Order of St. Dominic, who are also holders of the palm of martyrdom, and who will also be canonized as saints of the Catholic world in October.

However, doubly significant to us here, is the inclusion of the "greatest hero of the whole group" (cf. *Christian Witnessing: Martyrdom and Martyrs*, p. 87), a very simple man by the name of Lorenzo Ruiz.

Lorenzo, an "escribano" in the employment of the Dominicans in Binondo, had never entertained the thought of going to Japan in one way or another. It must have been by Divine Providence that he was included in the Dominican mission that went to pagan Japan of 1637. There, with his Dominican companions, he meekly surrendered himself to the torments, the cruelty, the excruciating pains of martyrdom; he chose to valiantly profess the faith; he was willing to die for God a thousand times.

Three hundred and fifty years after their martyrdom in the lands of Southern Japan to this year is a long wait. But a long wait that is not without its glorious denouement. For today we have become richer for having at last a Filipino Saint; yes, a Filipino Saint not only for Filipinos but for the whole world to venerate.

By all means, let us bask in the reflected glory that is Lorenzo's. However, let us not engross ourselves unduly in the superficialities of his celebration. Let us pray to him for his heavenly intercession for us to lead lives dedicated to the truth, justice, love of our fellowmen and, above all, love of God.

FR. VICENTE CAJILIG, O.P.

# Eucharistic Congresses and Our National Eucharistic Year

*Commemorating a great religious event*

On February 7, 1937, great crowds of people thronged the Luneta grandstand to celebrate the closing day of the Thirty-third International Eucharistic Congress held in Manila, presided over by the Papal legate, Cardinal Dougherty. In the evening of that day, from his sickbed, Pope Pius XI delivered an address to the Philippines via short-wave radio, where he encouraged them to a greater missionary activity: "Our hope from a more ardent love of our Lord in the august sacrament of the altar, from a more frequent communion with Him, (is that) there may come a daily increase in devotion to missionary activity." The theme of the International Eucharistic Congress was "Mission Spirit", an appropriate one considering the situation of the Philippines as the only Catholic nation in Asia. The Congress was celebrated with many different programs to uplift the spiritual life of the faithful, by making them go to the very source of all Christian life. And the fruit of that Congress may have been the steady faith of the Filipino people manifested during the difficult years of the Second World War, the period of reconstruction, and the various crises the people have had to face since 1937.

Fifty years later, Luneta, now Rizal Park, became the scene of the commemoration of that important national religious event. The Bishops of the Philippines had declared December 8, 1986 to December 8, 1987 as a National Eucharistic Year, and on February 7, 1987, crowds of people had once again thronged to what was once known as Luneta.

While the theme of the International Eucharistic Congress of 1937 was outward-looking (Mission Spirit), this time the Filipino Catholics had to look within themselves and at one another. The theme chosen for the National Eucharistic Year was like an invitation to unity and reconciliation — One Bread, One Body, One People. In spite of the presence of the highest civil authority of the nation, this was clearly not a political exercise. The great turnout of people on that day was a restatement of the adherence of the Catholic Filipino to his faith, and to the source of strength within his faith — the Holy Eucharist.

The goal that was set by the Bishops for the National Year was the renewal of the spiritual life through a closer approach to the Eucharist. This was how they explained the rationale behind the commemoration: "As a well-attended international event and national spiritual celebration, the (1937) Congress was especially fruitful for the faith of our people, renewing and deepening eucharistic devotion and consciousness in the Church in our country... After reflecting on the national situation not only in its more positive and hopeful aspects, but also in its continuing difficulties, the Bishops of the Philippines recognize the need today to deepen and intensify the Christian life rooted in the Eucharist, as sacrifice, sacrament and presence."

With such a clear-sighted objective, the initiative of remembering the 1937 Congress with a 1987 Eucharistic Year was not merely a "sentimental journey" to the past. The Bishops of the Philippines wanted a revival or a prolongation of the fruits of that memorable Eucharistic Congress.

### *What is a Eucharistic Congress?*

A Eucharistic Congress is a national or international event under the sponsorship of a permanent committee under the Holy Father, whose aim is to manifest, develop and spread the Catholic life all over the world by means of eucharistic worship. All Eucharistic Congresses, whether at the national or international level, have three important parts: 1) Religious and liturgical acts, such as the Mass, Communions, Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, public processions, etc.; 2) Cultural and academic acts, such as lectures, historical and theological studies; and 3) Public assemblies and expositions of the Catholic faith. The institution of Eucharistic Congresses can be considered a fruit of the deepening in Eucharistic piety

which had accelerated in the 19th century (a century which witnessed the birth of the Adoracion Nocturna — 1948 —, and many religious orders dedicated to the eucharistic worship and devotion). It was born in France, in an atmosphere and age of hostile laicism and veiled Church persecution. The first Eucharistic Congress, held in Lille, France in 1881, counted only with 4,000 participants and took place under a government prohibition to celebrate public processions. But that public manifestation of religious fervor bore much fruit in the life of the faithful.

Since 1881, International Eucharistic Congresses have been held in different countries at varying intervals of years, with a slight interruption during the First World War (resuming again in 1922) and during the Second World War (resuming in 1952). The International Eucharistic Congress held in Manila in the year 1937 was the second to the last before the outbreak of World War II. At present, International Eucharistic Congresses are held every four years, hosted by different countries.

The Eucharistic Congresses that have thus far been organized have proven a valuable instrument for the spread of many Christian values. Through them, nationalistic barriers have been diminished, leading to a greater union of different peoples, on the basis of their common beliefs. The people of God have become more aware of the universality of the Church and of the different aspects of the eucharistic life. But by far the greatest fruit of these congresses is the great increase in eucharistic piety and devotion among the faithful who, with their massive attendance to the eucharistic acts, manifest the great faith of the Christian people in the Eucharist.

### *The National Eucharistic Year is Born*

The National Eucharistic Year that we are presently celebrating in the Philippines can be considered an offspring of the Thirty-third International Eucharistic Congress held in Manila on February 3-7, 1937. In 1986, while the Bishops of the Philippines were reflecting on both the positive and negative aspects of the national religious life, they recognized the need to deepen and intensify the Christian life, rooted in the Eucharist. They saw that this end could best be served by a celebration on a national scale that would penetrate to the smallest units of society. Thus, on November 23, 1986, taking



occasion of the 50th anniversary of the International Eucharistic Congress, the president of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines proclaimed the National Eucharistic Year and set forth its objectives, which can be summarized as follows: 1) that the people learn more about the Eucharist; 2) that the Eucharist be brought to more and more people; and 3) that the renewed Christian life be reflected in better social relationships and in the improvement of Christian communities.

These aims reflect certain needs of the Catholic life in the Philippines. In the first place, there is still a lot of religious ignorance in spite of the great fervor that the people have. Then, there is the great lack of priests to administer the sacraments, and to catechize and evangelize the people. Finally, there is the age-old problem of harmonizing one's Christian beliefs with one's actuations in public and social life.

In the programs, activities and organization of the National Eucharistic Year celebration, great stress is being laid on the roles of the last-line level of Catholic life, that is, on the activities of the parish and of the different associations and movements, that will ultimately redound to the individual person. However, there are also predetermined guidelines and highlights on a national level. As laid down by a pastoral letter of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines, these are:

- the Proclamation and Launching of the National Eucharistic Year on November 23, 1986, Feast of Christ the King;
- the Solemn Celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the 1937 International Eucharistic Congress on February 3-7, 1987;
- an International Theological Conference on "The Alliance of the Hearts of Jesus and Mary" on December 1-3, 1987;
- a National Eucharistic Congress in Manila on December 4-8, 1987.

It is hoped that this national manifestation of eucharistic devotion may lead to a deep spiritual renewal and change of heart within each individual Filipino catholic.

It is clear from the parallelism of activities and events planned out for this year that a change of heart and an increase

in faith similar to that brought about by the events of 1933 is being sought. San Miguel Corporation, the country's biggest corporation, has given its logistical support to many of these endeavors. Some of the more significant ones have been organized by the different committees catering to different sectors of society, like the disabled, the prisoners, the young people, businessmen, etc. Religious communities, like the Pink Sisters, have organized brigades of "Eucharistic Adorers". Many parishes have instituted a chapel for the perpetual adoration of the Holy Eucharist, in which parishioners accompany the Lord in overnight vigils. Retreats and recollection teams are going around to service various groups and parishes. In the final analysis, of course, the much sought change of heart can only be achieved by the penetration of the Holy Spirit together with the free cooperation of each man.

### *A lasting spiritual revolution*

It may be seen as purely coincidental that the present National Eucharistic Year celebration are taking place during a period of rapid social changes in the country — in fact, in a period of national reconstruction after a peaceful revolution. But the circumstances of the proclamation of the National Eucharistic Year and the plan of activities for its celebration have their own autonomy. For example, the fact that February 7 is one of the important dates in this year's celebration has no direct relation to the other fact that February 7 was the crucial date of the 1986 revolution. It is simply because the International Eucharistic Congress of 1933 had its closing ceremonies and biggest popular assembly on that precise date.

Nevertheless, the parallelism may be instructive, as one newspaper article put it — "50 years ago, Luneta was the site of a spiritual revolution." Indeed, the objectives of the National Eucharistic Year, which involve a radical change of heart, can be considered a kind of "spiritual revolution". And after a physical revolution, what could be more fitting than a spiritual one?

We have to point out however, that the call for a spiritual revolution, is *not* a utilitarian one. One other words, a change of heart is not being sought merely as an *instrument* for national reconstruction, much less if this national reconstruction is understood only in the purely economic sense. A change of heart is being sought, *in itself*, for the sake of the person, who has a transcendental dimension and an innate value. That

is why the first two objectives stated in the National Eucharistic Year proclamation (an increase in doctrine and faith, a greater access to the treasures of the Eucharist) refer to the inner life of the person. This spiritual renewal will then "overflow" into social relations, including the volatile issues affecting national reconstruction. Should we lose sight of this transcendental perspective in our Eucharistic Year celebrations, we could easily fall into the temptation of "politicizing" such a momentous religious event. In other words, were the national context different, were there no pressing need for national reconstruction, there would still be a pressing need for the change of heart or a deepening in our religious convictions, and the National Eucharistic Year would still be significant and important to our life as a nation.

A homely but significant example of the impact of a national religious event can be provided by the experience of Amalia who was 12 years old when she received her first Holy Communion on a rainy February day, as part of the 1937 International Eucharistic Congress celebrations. Fifty years later, she was again present at the launching of the National Eucharistic Year, evoking memories of her first physical meeting with the Eucharistic Lord. She was in the same grounds and, just like 50 years ago, it was also raining. Her presence there, together with many other "oldtimers" is like a symbol of the endurance of the Catholic faith of the Filipino people, in spite of the many social changes during the interval. Says Amalia, "Fifty years ago, you could stand in the middle of Luneta and you would know everybody. Now, I could stand at the Rizal Park and not know anyone." Yes, circumstances have changed. The national population has increased greatly, and the urban population has swollen to unmanageable proportions. The pace of living is accelerating. Materialism, with all its consequences, is slowly creeping into our lives. But the conversion of heart, rooted in the Eucharistic life, still remained after fifty years. And we hope that after another fifty years, there can be other Amalias who can look back at their participation in the National Eucharistic Year of 1987 and remember it as a focal point in their personal religious life.

MSGR. JOSEFINO S. RAMIREZ

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# The Central Place of the Eucharist

*That the Eucharist is central not only for the sacraments and the liturgical life of the faithful, but also for the individual life of each Christian, for our Christian communities, even for ecumenical relations and for the future of the world is the fundamental concern of this paper.*

## THE EUCHARIST, HEART OF THE SACRAMENTS

What is the Christian life, the life of faith? Much more than a belief in an ideology or a set of truths — of course, there are basic truths we believe in — or the observance of a set of laws, it is our adherence to the person of Jesus Christ. Basically, it is our contact with Christ, our encountering Christ, in community and individually. For the risen Lord is alive today among us, participating in our time and activities and life, communicating his life to us today. With him we give our response to the Father; we accept to “walk with Christ,” like the disciples of Emmaus. We live with him our loves, our sufferings, our hopes, even our sins, for which we expect forgiveness from him. We try to be fully human with him, without shirking our responsibilities, without trying to escape from the realities of everyday life. We do this as the pilgrim people, the People of God of the Church, who journey with Christ, who



reconciled us with God and one another and who has brought our humanity to its fullness, for he is the complete man, the model man, the man of God who made us sons and daughters of God and helps us to grow to his full stature, his full humanity.

The risen and living Lord is no longer visible among us. How, then, can we still encounter him today?

We encounter him (and through him the Father, to whom he leads us, in the Spirit), in various ways: speaking and listening to him in prayer, hearing his Word, almsgiving, committing ourselves to our neighbor, reconciliation with God and neighbor, penance, obedience and seeking God's will, our acceptance of suffering, our mercy and compassion; in short, the whole of our daily Christian living.

But we encounter Christ most of all and most intensely in the privileged signs of the sacraments. These are the signs entrusted to the Church that guarantee to us that Christ is alive and active; through them, he gives us life, hope, happiness, forgiveness, a share in his commitment. Note how these signs are *rooted in life*, how they accompany us in the key aspects and phases of life: birth and growth, nourishment, joy and healing, social commitment; death (the rite of Christian burial) is not included, as it is a sacramental (a quasi-sacrament), as sacraments are only for the living. Compared to everyday Christian living (the everyday encounters with the Lord), the sacraments come as peak moments, at what is called in phenomenology the foreground experience, summing up and intensifying the background experience of everyday life. Compare here with love found in the life of the family: people in a family do things for one another because they love one another, but they say "I love you" only at peak moments.

Let's have a closer look at this. The *sacraments of birth and growth* are BAPTISM, by which we are born to the Christian life, CONFIRMATION, by which the Spirit makes us grow in that life toward adulthood, and the Eucharist, which keeps nourishing that life for all who are willing to come, from day to day, or at least from week to week, through the body of Christ.

Then, there are the *sacraments of healing*: penance and the anointing of the sick, and the Eucharist. This is perhaps an aspect of the Eucharist we overlook too easily. Already Trent called the Eucharist "the antidote whereby we may be freed from

daily faults and be preserved from mortal sins" (XIIIth Session, Ohapter II, 1551, DENZ, n. 1635). At the heart of the eucharistic celebration, do we not hear in the words of the Institution, "...so that sins may be forgiven"? And we have the Penitential Act, the washing of hands, the words of the Our Father, the Agnus Dei, the invitation to communion, "Lord, I am not worthy..."; often the readings too and incidental phrases in prayers, all reminders of the important penitential aspect of the eucharist.

Finally, though all the sacraments are social at least in the sense that they are corporate acts of the Church, there are sacraments that are directly oriented toward social commitment and service: orders, which commits the ministers to the service of the ecclesial community; marriage, which commits husbands and wives to one another and their families; and the eucharist: the Lord Jesus, who makes himself our food and drink, wants us to make us also one another's food and drink. More will be said about this later.

#### THE EUCHARIST, CENTER OF THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH

The Eucharist is not only the heart of the sacramental system entrusted by the Lord to his Church, but the very center of the whole life of the Church. Of capital importance to make us understand this is the text of St. Paul in 1 Cor. 10:16-17: "The blessing-cup that we bless is a communion with the blood of Christ, and the bread that we break is a communion with the body of Christ. The fact that there is only one loaf means that, though there are many of us, we form a single body because we all have a share in this one loaf." What Paul is trying to tell us is this: first, that by eating his bread and drinking his blood, we become one with the Lord Jesus. Second, Paul plays also on the double meaning of the word "body": by partaking of his eucharistic body, we become [more] his ecclesial body. Third, since the eucharistic body (and blood) given to all are one and the same for all, they make us into only one body, one community, one Church, for there is only one Christ, whether as Eucharist or as Church.

Of course, the Eucharist presupposes that somehow we are already the body of the Church through baptism and faith. We have been incorporated into the Church through baptism. Because we believe in the risen Lord, we respond to his call to

come together and to be united in him through the Eucharist, however diverse we may be, however little seems to bind us together, but this basis is there: we believe in our Lord who was crucified and is risen and we know we are one in him, we are called together by him, and we listen to his Word, the message of life he speaks to us. Our eucharistic assembly is by priority linked to the "day of the Lord," because Sunday is the day of his resurrection and this assembly is the fundamental sign at which outsiders can see that here is the Church of the Lord.

This Sunday assembly particularly is also a wonderful manifestation of the hierarchical structure of the Church and of the unity of its members around their leaders in the diversity of their roles and ministries: celebrant, deacon, acolytes and other special ministers of communion, lectors, leaders of the praying and singing, choir members, all exercising their ministries. It is the eucharistic liturgy that makes the Church community stand out as an organic, organized and unified community by assigning to the laity those roles and ministries that belong to them (See GENERAL INSTRUCTION ON THE ROMAN MISSAL [GIRM] nos. 58-73; DOCUMENTS ON THE LITURGY [DOL] pp. 485-488, nos. 1448-1463).

Against the background of these presuppositions, we can then emphatically state with the GIRM, n. 1:

The celebration of the Mass, the action of Christ and of the People of God arrayed hierarchically, is for the universal and the local Church as well as for each person the center of the whole Christian life. In the Mass we have the high point of the work that in Christ God accomplishes to sanctify us and the high point of the worship that in adoring God through Christ, his Son, we offer to the Father... All other liturgical rites and all the works of the Christian life are linked with the eucharistic celebration, flow from it, and have it as their end (DOL), p. 470, n. 1391.

Pope John Paul II sums up in his letter via Card. Knox to the organizers of the Eucharistic Congress of Lourdes: "The Eucharist makes the Church,' it unites as members of one body those who share in the same Body of Christ: 'May they all be one!'" (Jn. 17: 21) (Notitiae n. 154, March 1979, p. 155).

It is the unifying Holy Spirit who creates a new and stronger unity among those who participate in the eucharist. As you know, we have in the Eucharist two epicleses, two invocations normally directed to the Holy Spirit. The first, before the Institution words, asks God to send the Holy Spirit to change bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ; the second epiclesis comes a little after the Institution and asks that those who receive the eucharistic body and blood of Christ may be united more as the ecclesial body of Christ. This is, in fact, completely in line with the words of the Institution themselves, where it is said that "this is the cup of the new and everlasting covenant," for Christ in the Eucharist comes to strengthen among us that new and lasting, definitive bond of life and love between God and his people which we call the covenant.

The bonds of ecclesial community which the Eucharist strengthens are oriented even more to the universal Church than directly to the local community of the parish or its equivalents. As Diekmann said years ago, "Because the Eucharist is the new covenant.... because.... the Eucharist is the fountain of all grace, Church and Eucharist in a very real sense are coterminous, coextensive" (Godfrey Diekmann, "The Eucharist Makes the People of God," *Worship* 39, n. 8, 1965, p. 460). This is why in every official Eucharistic Prayer we express our unity with the Holy Father, the Pope as head of the Church, and with all bishops as well as with our own, and we pray for the whole Church, even for the whole world.

If in the Eucharist we celebrate the feast of the new covenant, then it will be the Eucharist that will help us to put into practice what Jesus left us as his last will and testament on the very night that he instituted the Eucharist, the so well known and so often quoted but still so difficult: "Love one another as I have loved you." And this is the fundamental law, the very constitution of the Church, to which the Eucharist commits us. Would that also make people today, looking at us from the outside, say of us as they said of the first Christians, "Look how they love one another," as a result of our contact with the Lord in the Eucharist? That was also to a great extent the source of the fervor of the early Christian community as described by Luke in Acts (see Acts 2:42-47; 4:32-35; 5:12-14).

Very important for understanding the centrality of the Eucharist in the life of the Church is that we keep in mind that it is a sacrifice, not only as the memorial celebration of Christ's sacrifice but also as the sacrifice offered by the Church today.



The People of God are a priestly people; there is only one priesthood, the one of Christ; in this both people and ordained priests share, but each group in its own special way. Says the GIRM in n. 62:

In the celebration of the Mass the faithful are a holy people, a people God has made his own, a royal priesthood; they give thanks to the Father and offer the victim not only through the hands of the priest but also together with him and learn to offer themselves. They should endeavor to make this clear by their deep sense of reverence for God and their charity to all who share with them in the celebration... They should become one body, whether by hearing the word of God, or joining in prayers and song, *or above all by offering the sacrifice together and sharing together in the Lord's table* (DOL p. 486, emphasis mine).

This offering of Christ's sacrifice is not something that we do outwardly, as a sort of objective gesture; it involves us very deeply, personally, subjectively. To understand this clearly, let us first look at the sacrifice of Christ.

For him, the most important thing was not how and what he suffered and how much he suffered (though, of course, that too was momentous), but rather the dispositions and attitude with which he accepted and offered his sacrifice. Jesus did not seek his death, he asked in the garden that "this cup" be taken away from him, he was willing and ready to accept the consequences of the mission entrusted to him by the Father and all the implications of his love for the Father and of people. To save people, to proclaim the Good News to the poor, to offer to all forgiveness and life in abundance, to found a kingdom of freedom and joy, that love of his was ready to sacrifice everything, including his very life. For this Jesus gave his unconditional "yes" to the Father and his plan, his absolute loyalty. Nothing could sway him from that; remember the temptations in the desert, where Satan tried to change his objectives, or the recriminations of the Jewish leaders and the attempts of the people and even of his very disciples who protested against the cross or sought personal greatness rather than service. He went ahead, whatever the cost, even though he knew that the leaders of the people would eventually turn against him, for he upset their securities, and even the people would abandon him when he was not the kind of Messiah they were expecting.

This was the attitude of Jesus not only in his supreme act of self-giving on the cross but also in the symbolic sign in which he expressed all this during the Last Supper. When he said, "This is my body for you..." This is the cup of my blood shed for you...." he said, in fact, "This is I who give myself for you." He gave himself to his disciples then and now as their food and drink, their sustenance of life, and it was added by him, or perhaps by his living body of the Church, "Do this in memory of me": do likewise, do the same as I have done. Give yourself without counting the cost, so that others might live and be free. Give with me your unconditional "yes" to the Father, and also to the people around you, for by encountering you in this Eucharist, I make you capable of doing so. "In your minds you must be the same as Christ Jesus," said St. Paul (Phil. 2:5) and it is Jesus in the Eucharist who gives us this disposition of radical commitment.

Now, when we offer Jesus' sacrifice and ours with him, and receive him in the Eucharist, he comes to us not merely for our consolation but to share his own dispositions and attitude with us and to make us capable of sharing in His own commitment. This applies first to his body of the Church, the people of the covenant, but also to each of us individually. It is first the Universal Church, then the local communities, that must dare to speak out and to stand up for all that is right and good and to resist evil, for communities can do much more than individual persons; also the individual Christian must have the courage to follow his or her master without conditions or reservations.

What plays also an important role in these considerations is this: in the liturgy, with the Eucharist at its very center, we offer with Jesus our worship to God. But the prophets of the Old Testament, Jesus himself and the New Testament authors too, keep reminding us that our basic worship of God is the Christian life itself. If our ritual worship in the sacraments and the whole of the liturgy is not based on that basic worship of our life, our ritual worship is without any value!

Paul still puts it mildly when he states that by our daily living we worship God: "Think of God's mercy, my brothers, and worship him, I beg you, in a way that is worthy of thinking beings, by offering your living bodies as a holy sacrifice, truly pleasing to God (Rom. 12:1). The prophets and Christ and the apostles state emphatically: "What I want is mercy, not sacrifice" (Mt. 12:7 and so many related texts). "Alas for

you, scribes and pharisees, you hypocrites, you who pay your tithe of mint... and have neglected the far weightier matters of the Law — justice, mercy, good faith!" (Mt. 23:23). "Pure, unspoil't worship in the eyes of God they need it, and keeping oneself uncontaminated by the world" (Jas. 1:27). These are only a few sample texts among the many about a standard theme that runs all through both Testaments.

When the prophets particularly were hammering on this theme, they were asking for justice and an end to all oppression and exploitation in the name of the covenant: if the Lord has brought his people together and bound it to himself in a covenant that is as strong as blood ties (cf. Ex. 24:1-11) and as durable and deep as the bonds of marriage (cf. Hos. ch. 2 among several other texts), then it is intolerable in the name of that same covenant that people do not accept and treat one another as brothers and sisters. When God has been and still is so generous with his people, we have to be concerned and to care for one another. When we celebrate the new covenant in the blood of the Lord, we can do no less than be committed to another.

*What will authenticate our offering? To what does the Eucharist commit us?*

When the Lord Jesus came to establish the new covenant between God and his new people, he had first to do away with what stood in the way of that covenant, namely sin: his first task was one of reconciliation, of reestablishing the right relationship between God and his people and mutually between people. If that was his task, we too must commit ourselves that this reconciled life is concretely manifested in our often divided communities and in the world. For the life of the Church itself, we are told by Christ about our offerings: "If you are bringing your offering to the altar and there you remember that your brother has something against you, leave your offering there before the altar, go and be reconciled with your brother first, and then come back and present your offering" (Mt. 5:23-24). People who are in the same Eucharist can no longer treat one another as irreconcilable enemies whom we suspect and fight. We may never despair of our breakups but must try to repair bonds broken by selfishness and fears. Yes, to us Samaritans must become neighbors. In the Eucharist we accept and greet one another with the peace of Christ.

St. Paul tells us: "It was God who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the work of handing on this reconciliation.. He has entrusted to us the news that they [people] are reconciled" (2 Cor. 5:17-18). This extends beyond our inner-Church life, to our ecumenical concerns and even to the task of bringing people together in peace and in dialogue rather than confrontation all over the world. Think in this connection about the many recent efforts towards world peace of Pope John Paul II. It is in a way very tragic that precisely the Eucharist, which should bring the disciples of Christ together, has become a sign of separation and tragic division between brothers and sisters who all recognize Christ as their Lord. Except for rare, exceptional cases, we cannot yet sit at the same table to eat the Lord's eucharistic body as long as we have not yet become his ecclesial body.

The task of reconciliation comprises also that of liberation. Remember how even in the Old Testament in the first Passover God first set his people free before he made a covenant with them: he made them a people freed from slavery in order that he could bind them to himself with the ties of love of the covenant. In the Passover of Christ, highlighted in the sacrifice of the cross which is brought to us in every celebration of the Eucharist, Christ sets us free in the deepest of our human existence when he reconciles us with the Father and with one another, and through the eucharist he makes us in our turn share in his mission of setting our brothers and sisters free, for the same purpose and with the same means as those of Christ the Redeemer, Christ the liberator from sin and all evil, as is said beautifully in the basic theological document of the International Eucharistic Congress of Lourdes, *Jesus Christ, pain rompu pour un monde nouveau* (Jesus Christ, Bread Broken for a New World, Paris 1980). It reasons as follows:

We have to keep the same goal in mind as Christ the Redeemer, both for ourselves and our brothers and sisters: to free us from enslavement (not the right of it) to money, to profit making, to work or to power; at the same time we should try to change those conditions of social and economic life which obstruct true freedom and true justice and we stand up to those who resort to violence, lies and abuse of power through the misuse of the means of domination. We do so not because we serve an ideology or a political system. We are in the service of man, of every person, whose dignity is priceless, of every person who is called to become aware that he or she is a child



of God and has to do his or her share in building up a world of freedom in which the fundamental equality of all before God is effectively respected.

We must also use the same means. If we share in the body given up and the blood shed by Christ to make us free persons and a free people of God, we too are called to become ourselves "bread broken for a new world," ready in the good fights we have to fight, to lay down our life instead of keeping it. Our strength does not come from the outside: it is the freedom of the power of love communicated to us by the Lord when he encounters us in the Eucharist.

If the Church wants to celebrate the Eucharist "in spirit and in truth" according to the mentality of Christ, then the Church has to become in all its life, a "sacrament," a visible, effective sign of freedom and liberation for all people. We insist again that this is not in the service of an ideological or political system. And for this purpose it is called itself constantly to free itself of whatever slaveries that burden it or slow down its journey forward to the Lord; the Church must rid itself of everything that prevents it from bearing effective witness to the freedom which brought us when he comes and came to "seek out and save what was lost" (Lk. 19:10). Christians, and a Church that remain prisoners of their own conflicts are severely handicapped to proclaim true freedom to others. But if we let Christ encounter us in the Eucharist and give us there the strength to follow him, he will also empower us to struggle so that we and our brothers and sisters will not be treated as objects to be manipulated as pawns but as what we are called and are: God's sons and daughters working together for a world in which the rights and dignity of every person are respected.

Particularly, the Eucharist makes us a servicing Church, a people of servants. The Synoptic evangelists all give us the account of the institution of the eucharist; John, apparently, judges this sufficiently known and has spoken extensively about the eucharist at other occasions, particularly at the multiplication of the bread and the eucharistic discourse in Jn. 6. But still he wants to remind us in what spirit Jesus instituted the Eucharist in his account of the Last Supper. And so he narrates the washing of the feet of his apostles. He insists that they,

the leaders, must be, first of all, servants of their people, as Jesus has been their servant (see Jn. 13). But if this applies to the leaders, it affects also the members, and again, it is a demand made on us all in the light of the Eucharist itself.

It is particularly the poor we have to learn to serve, for whom we have to have a preferential option, according to Pope John II, "who are to be our masters," as St. Vincent de Paul said. For the shared bread of the Eucharist converts us into a sharing people. We cannot stay united with Christ if we stay away from people who are hungry and thirsty, who are naked and strangers, sick or in prison and defenseless against exploitation, for Jesus identifies with those people (see Mt. 25:35ff). And yet, we cannot let the "sacrament of the poor" replace the Eucharist, as some argue (why go to Mass if there are so many poor around us, they say): our care for the poor must flow from the Eucharist, from Christ's own concern for them, otherwise it may dry up very soon. In that sense the French theologian Francois Varillon says about the Eucharist: "In that way the Eucharist becomes the criticism of every community that exists." In the letter of Pope John Paul to Card. Knox quoted earlier, the Holy Father describes the consequences of the Eucharist for the communities: for the way we approach our human brothers and sisters, especially the poor, how to serve them, how to share with them the bread of the earth and the bread of love, how to build with them a world of greater justice, a world more worthy of the children of God, and how to prepare at the same time "a new world to come" in which God himself will bring the definitive renewal and a total communion that will never flag" (Rev. 21:1-5; CONST. GAUDIUM ET SPES, nos. 39 and 45).

In the Eucharist Christ makes his Church as a body and each of its members a faithful witness to his own person and mission, even though at times we forget what we are called to be and give in to the temptation of following the ways of the world. But in every eucharist Christ is there to remind us of his message by his Word and to give us the strength to return to our original vocation.

The Eucharist is also very important for the Church to carry out its mission of evangelization. The Vatican II's Decree

on the Ministry and Life of Priests, n. 5, said: "The Eucharist therefore stands and apex of all evangelization; catechumens are led gradually toward a share in the Eucharist and the faithful who already bear the seal of baptism and confirmation enter through the Eucharist more fully into the body of Christ" (DOL p. 73, n. 260). The Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity *Ad Gentes*, in n. 39 stresses the important role of the Eucharist *above all* in building up the young local churches (see DOL p. 70, n. 256). We should also keep in mind here how after the initial thrust of the young Church, there was little direct, organized evangelization. The key impact of the Church took place via the Eucharist and its liturgy of the word to which non-Christians were invited and via the change in lifestyle brought about among the Christians by their encounter with the Lord in the eucharist. And also for today's Christians, isn't it that, for most of them, the Sunday liturgy is almost the exclusive way of keeping their faith alive and keeping them evangelized as the Good News is proclaimed to them? Even the Eucharistic Prayer is to them a resounding, permanent proclamation of the central mystery of our faith: the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

#### THE EUCHARIST AND THE DIOCESE

All that has been said above about what the Eucharist means to the Church at large and to its smaller communities, even to the individual Christian, applies, within the proper proportions, also to the diocese. Yet we cannot but notice how in the documents of Vatican II the diocese is singled out as of having a special relationship with the Eucharist. It begins with the Constitution on the Liturgy, art. 41: "The bishop is to be looked upon as the high priest of his flock; the faithful's life in Christ is in some way deriving from and depending on him. Therefore all should hold in great esteem that liturgical life of the diocese centered around the bishop;... they must be convinced that the preeminent manifestation of the Church is present in the full, active participation of all God's holy people in these liturgical celebrations, especially in the same Eucharist, in a single prayer, at one altar at which the bishop presides, surrounded by his college of priests and by his ministers" (DOL p. 12, n. 41).

The Dogmatic Constitution on the Church in n. 26 adds: "Any community of the altar, under the sacred ministry of the bishop, stands out clearly as that symbol of that charity and 'unity of the Mystical Body, without which there can be no salvation,' (as St. Thomas says, *Summa Theol.* 3a. 73.3)" (DOL p. 34, n. 146). "In administering all the sacraments, as St. Ignatius the Martyr already attested in the early days of the Church, priests, on various grounds, are linked hierarchically with their bishop and so, in a certain way, bring his presence to every gathering of the faithful" (Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests, n. 5; see DOL p. 73, n. 260).

Again *Lumen Gentium* stresses the role of the bishop and his link with the eucharist in n. 26: "Marked with the fullness of the sacrament of orders, 'a bishop is the steward of the grace of the supreme priesthood,' especially in the Eucharist, which he offers or causes to be offered and by which the Church continually lives and grows" (DOL, p. 33, n. 146).

Already St. Ignatius of Antioch in the second century in his letter to the Philippians saw both the Eucharist and the bishop as principles of unity in the Church, without explaining, though, the manner in which they were: "Take care, then, to partake of one Eucharist; for one is the flesh of our Lord, Jesus Christ, and one is the cup to unite us with his blood, and one altar, just as there is one bishop assisted by the presbytery" (Phil. 4).

Beautiful and deep and important texts, which we cannot analyze here but which we simply let speak for themselves. In any case, they call our attention to the fact that liturgy is not just a hobby or a sideline but an important pastoral concern for us and they remind us of the need to have a good liturgical office in our respective dioceses.

#### THE EUCHARIST, THE WORLD AND THE KINGDOM

That the role of the Eucharist in the life of the Church is not limited to the inner life of the Church and its actual members has already been mentioned above more than once. We now call attention to the fact that the Church is committed to the world, not to be of the world but to lead the world to God and to establish his kingdom in it. The Eucharist commits us to



the uplifting of all, to the reconciliation of all, to peace and justice in the whole world, to service of the world and of all God's children, whether they are aware of it or not, whether they are members of the Church or not. All people bear for us the face of Christ.

The Eucharist has to work as the food of resurrection not only for us who already visibly belong to his body — and for us already now, not merely after death, as John assures us: "He who eats my body... has eternal life" (6:54) — but will empower us as an upraising, uplifting force in the whole world, which brings it dignity and hope and a future to live for.

The fundamental reason for this is that the Eucharist commits us to the kingdom of Christ, to which are called all God's children. That is why in the very Institution words of the Eucharist we say: "The cup of my blood shed for you and for the many" (a Hebraism which means "for all people.")

With the Lord, the Church strives for it that eventually there be "one flock and one shepherd, gathering together people from all races and cultures, all tongues and nations from all over the world in one symphony of praise to God. And so, as Jesus gave himself as "bread... for the life of the world" (Jn. 6:51), so we too must become bread and wine for people, for the world, until the Kingdom is established. We should keep in mind the beautiful prayer of the Didache (9,4) and make it ours: Just as the bread broken was scattered first on the hills, then was gathered and became one, so let your Church be gathered from the ends of the earth into your kingdom, for yours is glory and power through all ages" (text as given in Lucien Deiss, *Springtime of the Liturgy*, Liturgical Press, 1979, p. 75).

† JESUS DOSADO, D.D.

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# ECUMENICAL DIMENSIONS OF THE HOLY EUCHARIST

There is a close relationship between ecumenism and the Holy Eucharist, precisely because of the close link existing between the mystery of the Church and the mystery of the Eucharist, between ecclesial and eucharistic communion.

The Eucharist in fact contains what is the very foundation of the being and unity of the Church: the Body of Christ, offered in sacrifice and given to all as the bread of eternal life. It signifies an existing unity brought about by Christ.

Unfortunately, the "sin of disunity" weighs still heavily upon the Christian world. Ecumenism aims at the restoration of that unity which Christ bestowed on his Church from the beginning and that cannot be lost.

In this process towards unity the sacrament of the Eucharist plays a vital role, because "of its very nature, it signifies the fullness of profession of faith and the fullness of ecclesial communion."<sup>1</sup>

In the following pages we will first bring our attention to the phenomenon of ecumenism. Then we will briefly comment

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<sup>1</sup> *Instruction on Admitting Other Christians to Eucharistic Communion in the Catholic Church*, IV, n. 1.

on the Eucharist as Bond of Unity in the Church and, finally, we will analyze the provisions of the 1983 Code of Canon Law and the norms issued by the CBCP about ecumenical practices regarding eucharistic celebration.

## **I. UNDERSTANDING ECUMENISM**

Ecumenism is a very serious matter: nothing to be taken lightly, or that can be sufficiently disposed of with a prayer meeting, and with a warm feeling of togetherness.

### **A. The painful fact of division**

Christ the Lord founded one Church and one Church only. However, many Christian communions present themselves to men as the true inheritors of Jesus Christ; all indeed profess to be followers of the Lord but they differ in mind and go different ways, as if Christ Himself were divided. Certainly, such division openly contradicts the will of Christ, scandalizes the world, and inflicts damage on the most holy cause of proclaiming the good news to every creature.<sup>2</sup>

Two principal types of division affect the seamless robe of Christ. The first division occurred in the East, either because of the dispute over the dogmatic formulae of the Councils of Ephesus and Chalcedon, or later by the dissolving of ecclesiastical communion between the Eastern Patriarchates and the Roman See.

Still other divisions arose in the West more than four centuries later. These stemmed from the events which are commonly referred to as the Reformation. As a result, many communions, national or confessional, were separated from the Roman See.

These various divisions, however, differ greatly from one another not only by reason of their origin, place and time,

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<sup>2</sup> VATICAN II, *Unitatis Redintegratio*, n. 1..

but still more by reason of the nature and seriousness of questions concerning faith and Church order.

## **B. The means to promote Christian unity**

True ecumenism does not overlook differences, but explains them clearly and tries to bridge them. They are mistaken to think that ecumenism consists in saying "yes, all right" to anything that comes from the other side. "Nothing is so foreign to the spirit of ecumenism," the Vatican II says, "as a false irenicism (the conciliatory attitude that ignores disagreements in order to keep up an appearance of peace)."

The term "ecumenical movement" indicates the initiatives and activities encouraged and organized to promote Christian unity. They are: first, mutual respect, every effort to avoid expressions, judgments and actions which do not represent the conditions of our separated brethren with truth and fairness. Then, dialogue between competent experts from different Churches and communities; it also involves study and cooperation. Finally, common prayer and the task of spiritual renewal as supernatural means which alone can break down barriers that are now centuries-old between brothers of different Christian denominations.<sup>3</sup>

What about Worship Services and Sacramental Sharing? We painfully have to accept that *communio in sacris* (full participation in the sacraments especially in the Eucharist) is not yet possible. Let us simply conclude with the Vatican II that "the suppression of unity very generally forbids common worship. Grace to be obtained sometimes commends it. The concrete course to be adopted, when all the circumstances of time, place and persons have been duly considered, is left to the prudent decision of the local episcopal authority, unless the bishops' conference, or the Holy See, has determined otherwise."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, n. 4. Cf. Arch. BRUNO TORPIGLIANI, *Ecumenisms Principles and Goals*, in *Life Today*, April-May 1986, pp. 14-16.

<sup>4</sup> VATICAN II, *Unitatis Redintegratio*, n. 8..



### C. Renewal of attitudes

The ecumenical movement demands radical changes both in life and attitudes. "There can be no ecumenism worthy of the name without interior conversion. For it is from newness of attitudes of mind (cf. Eph. 4, 23), from self-denial and unstinted love, that desires of unity take their rise and develop in a mature way."<sup>5</sup>

Before the Vatican II, theologians hesitated to concede any Christian reality to the non-Catholic communities as such. The Council, on the other hand, recognized that "the separated churches and communities as such, though they suffer from defect have by no means been deprived of significance for salvation."<sup>6</sup> They share in the life of Christ and have a degree of communion with the Catholic Church which is greater or less depending on their sacramental fullness.

Besides, one cannot charge with the sin of the separation those who at present are born into these communities and in them are brought up in the faith of Christ. The Catholic Church accepts them with respect and affection as brothers.

Ecumenism is everybody's task. The Vatican II keeps telling us that "the concern for restoring unity involves the whole Church, faithful and clergy alike."

Having the same documents and spirit as background, the 1983 Code of Canon Law, reminds the highest authorities in the Church of the fact that "it is within their special competence to promote and direct the participation of Catholics in the ecumenical movement."<sup>7</sup> It also assigns similar responsibility for promoting Christian unity to the bishops for their own diocese and to the episcopal conference for its region, and

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<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, n. 7.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, n. 3.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. c. 755, 1.

urges them to establish guidelines for section toward that end, depending on local needs and opportunities.<sup>8</sup>

## II. HOLY EUCHARIST AND UNITY IN THE CHURCH

From a theological reflection on the Holy Eucharist we can bring home the conclusion that the Eucharist cannot be reduced to just one of its many aspects, all equally rich and meaningful: the Eucharist as the New Covenant, as Memorial, Sacrifice, Thanksgiving, Communion, Eschatological Sign, Mystery of Faith and Salvation.

For our present purpose, however, we want to underline only one of the above mentioned aspects, namely, the Eucharist as COMMUNION.

### A. One\* Bread, One Body

In words of St. Paul, "God made known to us the secret plan he had decided to complete by means of Christ. This plan, which God will complete when the time is right, is *to bring all creation together*, everything in heaven and on earth, with Christ as head" (Eph. 1, 9-10). His goal is *koinonia* (communio) in and with Christ, at both personal and ecclesial level. Such a "communio" is the supreme goal of the eucharistic celebration.

By instituting the Eucharist, Jesus fulfills man's quest for communion with God, man's desire for union with God. "Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in Me and I in him" (Jn. 6, 56).

On the other hand, there is a close connection between the Eucharist and the Church. The Fathers of the Church express

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<sup>8</sup> This mandate seems to coincide well with the provisions for diocesan and territorial ecumenical commissions contained in the May 14, 1967 *Ecumenical Directory* from the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity (nos. 3-8). (The anti-ecumenical provisions of the 1917 CIC 1325, par. 3, which prohibited discussions with non-Catholics about matters of faith, has been suppressed.) Cf. CORIDEN, J. in *The Code of Canon Law: A Text and Commentary*, New York, 1985, p. 549.

it this way: ECCLESIA EUCHARISTIAM FACIT, the Church "makes" the Eucharist. In turn EUCHARISTIA FACIT ECCLESIAM, the Eucharist "makes" the Church. In the language of Vatican II, "the unity of believers, who form one body in Christ, is in the Sacrament of the Eucharistic Bread both expressed and brought about."<sup>9</sup>

In similar words, the 1983 Code of Canon Law says that "the Eucharist signifies and effects the unity of the people of God and achieves the building up of the Body of Christ."<sup>10</sup>

A true understanding of the Eucharist leads us, then, to a true understanding of what is to "build up the body of Christ." Becoming "one single body" (cf. Eph. 2, 15-16) means breaking down all barriers that divide and walls that separate people into groups of insecure and hostile individuals or groups of selfish interests or self-serving projects. Ideally, our "communion" or "fellowship with the Son" (1 Cor. 1, 9) should make of us "one heart and one soul" (Acts 4, 32).

## B. Intercommunion

It is evident that the Eucharistic *communio* has a social dimension. As sacrament of faith and as sign of unity, the Eucharist *presupposes a community of faith and baptism*, carrying out the realization of that previously given unity.

This is vital for the question of Sacramental sharing with the communities with which the Catholic Church does not have full communion. The Catholic understanding, and much more the Orthodox conception of the Eucharist as sacrament of unity presupposes indeed to live in full ecclesial communion, actually expressed in the communion with the local bishop and the Bishop of Rome as the visible head of the Church and successor of Peter. Only then the Eucharistic celebration makes sense.

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<sup>9</sup> VATICAN II, *Lumen Gentium*, n. 3.

<sup>10</sup> Canon 897.

This explains why, though Vatican II opened the door for ecumenism, *communio in sacris* (full participation in the sacraments especially the Eucharist) cannot be admitted indiscriminately with churches not in full communion with the Roman Church.

However, it has to be stressed that Oriental non-Catholic churches have the same sacraments and hold almost all the dogmatic tenets of the Catholic Church. It is but logical that between them and the Catholic Church will exist a closer sacramental communion than with other churches that, though Christian, differ considerably from the Catholic Church.

Another additional point to consider is in connection with the consequences of the eucharistic, celebration *in common* that is, the fulfillment of social justice demands (cf. Mt. 5, 23ff). It is impossible to share the eucharistic bread without sharing as well our daily bread.

In other words, the eucharistic bread should put us not only in contact with the Risen Christ but also with one another. In it we celebrate His sacrificial death for us and participate in it through our own self-giving. From the table of the Eucharist, we go to the empty tables of the poor, bringing ourselves together with our gifts. Perhaps we have not yet got a perfect balance between the personal communion and the ecclesial communion.

### III. ECUMENICAL PRACTICES RELATED TO THE EUCHARIST

With the promulgation of the 1983 Code of Canon Law we were given some guidelines on this matter. Canon 844, for instance, is the result of Vatican II's deliberation on ecumenism. It is inspired in the Decr. *Orientalium ecclesiarum* (mainly nn. 25-28) and *Unitatis redintegratio* (mainly nn. 3, 8 and 22), and has to be understood in the light of the *Directory on Ecumenism* (1967), mainly nn. 38-63.



## A. General Norm on the Administration of Sacraments

"Catholic ministers may lawfully administer the sacraments only to Catholic members of Christ's faithful, who equally may lawfully receive them only from Catholic ministers, except as provided in par. 2, 3 and 4 of this canon and in can. 861, 2."

"In respect of the cases dealt with in par. 2, 3 and 4, the diocesan Bishop or the Episcopal Conference is not to issue general norms except after consultation with the competent authority, at least at the local level, of the non-Catholic Church or community concerned."<sup>11</sup>

The intent of these provisions is clear, namely to define the outer limits of permissible sharing in sacraments. It is concerned only with lawful giving and receiving of sacraments, the question of validity having been determined in principle by can. 842, 1.

It is concerned, moreover, with exceptions in the cases of penance, Eucharist, and anointing of the sick only. (C. 861, 2 is treated as an exception because it contemplates the giving of baptism by "any person with the right intention in case of necessity.")

The Sacraments received but once, are not at issue since since these may be received only within one's own communion.<sup>12</sup> The sacrament of marriage is treated elsewhere and especially in the canons, in part because of the common teaching of the latin Church that the spouses are the ministers of this sacrament; thus there are distinct considerations of giving and receiving the sacrament when one of the persons is a baptized non-Catholic.<sup>13</sup>

The new legislation replaces canon 731, 2 and 1258 of the former Code, which contained as absolute prohibition of sacraments," without prior reconciliation.

<sup>11</sup> Can. 844, par. 1 and 5.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Can. 842, 1.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. McManus, F., *The Office Sanctifying in the Church, Part I, The Sacraments in The Code of Canon Law: A Text and Commentary*, New York, 1985, p. 608.

About the *complementary norms for the exceptions*, since the principle of reciprocity should be respected in ecumenical relationships,<sup>14</sup> the canon adds that no general norms will be issued without consultation with at least a local authority of the respective church or community and preferably with some superior authority.

The language of this paragraph is carefully constructed to leave the diocesan bishop (and the conference of bishops) free to act in individual cases or in issuing general norms even if the consultation with the competent authority of the other communion is not favorable.

What has been the pronouncement of the Catholic Bishops of the Philippines on this regard? The CBCP, in a recent statement, leaves to the judgment of the diocesan bishop to determine if there is some other grave and pressing need, aside from those requirements mentioned in the Code (cf. c. 844), which may warrant Catholic ministers to administer the sacraments to other Christians not in full communion with the Catholic Church.<sup>15</sup>

## **B. Exceptional norms regarding the eucharist**

### **1. PARTICIPATION OF CATHOLICS IN THE EUCHARISTIC CELEBRATION ADMINISTERED BY NON-CATHOLIC MINISTERS**

The integrity of ecclesial communion and the good of souls are principles that must always be safeguarded. Nevertheless, since Eucharist is both sign of unity and source of grace, the Church can for adequate reasons allow Catholics to approach a non-Catholic minister for the reception of the Eucharist.

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<sup>14</sup> Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity, *Ecumenical Directory*, Part I, May 14, 1967, AAS (1967), p. 43.

<sup>15</sup> SCB, Prot. n. 35/84; Cf. TESTERA, F., *Canon Law Digest of the Philippines*, UST, Manila, 1987, p. 30.

These adequate reasons, according to c. 844, 2 are the following:

a. IN CASE OF GRAVE NECESSITY OR GENUINE SPIRITUAL ADVANTAGE

There must be a serious spiritual need for the Eucharist sustenance; that is, a "need for an increase in spiritual life and a need for a deeper involvement in the mystery of the Church." Other cases of "urgent necessity" are to be determined.

b. PROVIDED THAT THE DANGER OF ERROR OR INDIFFERENTISM IS AVOIDED

It is presumed that the one requesting Holy Communion is doing so in accord with his own conscience and has proper disposition.

c. IT IS PHYSICALLY OR MORALLY IMPOSSIBLE TO APPROACH A CATHOLIC MINISTER

It does happen, for instance that Catholics are scattered far from their ministers so that they cannot have access to them except at great trouble and expense. The situation of those in prison, those suffering persecution and migrant workers comes to mind.

d. IN CHURCHES IN WHICH THIS SACRAMENT IS VALID

No determination is made concerning what churches are meant. Of course, the Oriental non-Catholic churches are included here, since they have the same sacraments and hold almost all the dogmatic tenets of the Catholic Church.<sup>16</sup>

The provision extends the possibility, however, of Catholics receiving the sacraments beyond the Eastern churches to any other churches in which this sacrament is

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<sup>16</sup> Cf. SPCU, *Directory*, n. 42.

valid. Postconciliar directives from the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity explain that a church is to "have kept the substance of eucharistic teaching, the sacrament of orders, and apostolic succession,<sup>17</sup> i.e., in order to be judged as having valid sacraments.

Let us, finally, notice that the old legislation which prohibited all active participation by Catholics in non-Catholic sacred rites<sup>18</sup> has been abrogated by omission.

## 2. PARTICIPATION OF NON-CATHOLICS IN THE EUCHARISTIC CELEBRATION ADMINISTERED BY CATHOLIC MINISTERS.

In some exceptional circumstances Catholic ministers may lawfully administer the sacrament of the Eucharist to members of other Christian denominations. They can be either members of the oriental churches and of churches in the same condition as them, or simply other Christians who do not have full communion with the Catholic Church. In each case, the conditions which must be met differ.

### a. MEMBERS OF THE ORIENTAL CHURCHES WHICH DO NOT HAVE FULL COMMUNION WITH THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

Since, through apostolic succession, the Oriental Churches have the true sacraments of the priesthood and the Eucharist so that there exists almost a total communion with the Catholic Church, the danger of obscuring the relationship between Eucharistic communion and ecclesial communion is to some extent reduced.

As faith in the Holy Eucharist is taken for granted in this case, Catholic ministers may licitly administer the sacrament to members of these churches provided that:

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<sup>17</sup> Cf. SPCU, *Communication*, Oct. 17, 1973, n. 9; AAS 65 (1973) 616-619.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. 1917 CIC, can. 1258.



1) *They ask on their own for it;*

2) *They are properly disposed.*<sup>19</sup>

Since through apostolic succession, the Oriental Churches have the true sacraments of the priesthood and the Eucharist so that there exists almost a total communion with the Catholic Church, the danger of obscuring the relationship between Eucharistic communion and ecclesial communion is to some extent reduced. That is why no other requirement is demanded.

b. MEMBERS OF OTHER CHURCHES, WHICH ARE IN  
THE SAME SITUATION AS THE ORIENTAL CHURCHES.

The same norm above holds also for members of other churches, which in the judgment of the Apostolic See are in the same situation as the oriental churches as regards the sacrament of the Eucharist.

Which are these churches? A clue in this matter is provided by the Vatican II's *Decree on Ecumenism*, which singles out the Anglican communion among other ecclesial communities as one occupying "a special place" in which Catholic traditions and institutions in part continue to exist.<sup>20</sup>

There has been, however, no formal judgment published by the Apostolic See concerning the Anglican or other communions as churches "in the same situation as the Eastern Churches."<sup>21</sup>

c. OTHER CHRISTIANS WHO DO NOT HAVE FULL COM-  
MUNION WITH THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

For a person to be so admitted several conditions must be met simultaneously:

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<sup>20</sup> VATICAN II, *Unitatis Redintegratio*, n. 13.

<sup>21</sup> McMANUS, F., *op. cit.*, p. 610.

1) *That there be a serious need.*

This is similar to what we said above regarding the cases of grave necessity or genuine spiritual advantage. The canon expressly mentions the danger of death, but it can be any "other grave need, in the judgment of the diocesan bishop or the conference of bishop."<sup>22</sup>

2) *That they are unable to approach their own minister.*

Such might be the situation of those in prison, persecuted, migrant workers, etc.

3) *That they manifest the Catholic faith concerning the sacrament of the Eucharist.*

It is a faith not merely in the real presence but a faith in the doctrine of the Eucharist as taught by the Catholic Church.<sup>23</sup>

Finally, the usual additional requirement mentioned above:

4) *That the individual seek the sacrament of his or her own accord; and*

5) *That he or she be properly disposed.*<sup>24</sup>

Any kind of proselytism has to be avoided. Besides, the individual must have proper dispositions and lead a life worthy of a Christian. It is presumed that the one requesting communion is doing so in accord with his own conscience and the discipline of his own Church.

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<sup>22</sup> Cf. c. 844, 4.

<sup>23</sup> LYNCH, J. E., *Ecumenical Guidelines in A Pastoral Guide to Canon Law*, Dublin, 1977, p. 135.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. c. 844, 4.

### 3. CONCELEBRATION OF PRIESTS WITH MEMBERS OF ANOTHER CHURCH.

"It is forbidden for Catholic priests to concelebrate the Eucharist with priests or ministers of churches or ecclesial communities which are not in full communion with the Catholic Church."<sup>25</sup>

The canon simply forbids interdenominational concelebration. It does not change former discipline on this regard. A 1972 instruction of the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity affirmed the basic principle that "of its very nature, the celebration of the Eucharist signifies the fullness of the profession of faith and ecclesial communion."<sup>26</sup>

In the present legislation there are no special provisions for concelebration between those churches — such as the separated Eastern Churches — which have preserved the substance of the Eucharist.

Concelebration among Catholics of diverse rites, however, is not excluded by this canon, and permission for it can be obtained from the apostolic pro-nuncio or other papal legate. Only the rite of the host church may be used, but concelebrants may wear the vestments of their own rite.<sup>27</sup>

### 4. CELEBRATION OF THE EUCHARIST IN A CHURCH OF ANOTHER NON-CATHOLIC DENOMINATION.

"For a good reason a priest may celebrate the Eucharist in a place of worship of any church or ecclesial community which is not in full communion with the Catholic Church with the express permission of the local ordinary, provided there is no scandal."<sup>28</sup>

The local ordinary is the final judge of whether there may be scandal. Required for his permission is a just

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<sup>25</sup> Canon 908.

<sup>26</sup> SPCU, Inst. *In quibus rerum circumstantiis*, June 1, 1972; AAS 64 (1972) 518-525.

<sup>27</sup> *The Jurist*, 42 (1982) 168; Cf. HUELS, J.M., *The Code of Canon Law: A Text and Commentary*, p. 649.

<sup>28</sup> Canon 933..

cause, such as pastoral advantage or ecumenical good will. The old prohibition against celebrating Mass in the churches of heretics or schismatics<sup>29</sup> is abrogated.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Ecumenism was one of the main concerns of Vatican II Council and should equally be one of the main concerns of every Christian.

"May they all be one!" It is a prayer and a mandate. It is also a challenge.

Ecumenism is on the march. There has been a doctrinal opening in Vatican II as well as a juridical opening in the post-Vatican legislation, especially in the 1983 Code of Canon Law.

The first fruits can be seen already. The different Christian confessions and the Catholic Church strive for a better Word, looking forward hopefully for the day when the restored unity will shine on earth as a light for all peoples to follow.

"Only the mercy of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit can grant the ineffable grace of FULL COMMUNION, to Christians who profess Christ as Son of God and Savior," Pope John Paul II said on the Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul.

And since the celebration of the Eucharist signifies the fullness of profession of faith and the fullness of ecclesial communion only then *communio in sacris*, that is, full participation in the sacraments especially the Eucharist will be at last possible.

Our conclusion cannot be but a reminder to the diocesan bishops (and the conference of bishops) of the great value of Christian unity as well as of their responsibility in working for its restoration. The new Code of Canon Law leaves them freedom to act in individual cases or in issuing general norms as guidelines on the matter.

FR. JAVIER GONZALEZ, O.P.

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<sup>29</sup> 1917 CIC c. 823, 1.

# LOCAL LEGISLATION on the HOLY EUCHARIST

## I. *THE WAY OF RECEIVING COMMUNION BODILY POSTURE DURING MASS*

The posture or way in which Holy Communion is to be received may seem a matter of little or no import at all. This is not so. Piety and reverence towards the Eucharist cannot possibly be fostered unless suitable liturgical norms are observed. A common posture observed by all is also a sign of the unity of the assembly and its sense of community. It both expresses and fosters the inner spirit and purpose of those who take part in it (GEN. INST. ON THE ROMAN MISSAL [IGRM], n. 20).

### 1. *The Common Law:*

"In accordance with the custom of the Church, communion may be received by the faithful either kneeling or standing. One way or the other is to be chosen according to the decision of the Episcopal Conference, bearing in mind all the circumstances, above all the number of the faithful and the arrangement of the churches" (Instr. EUCHARISTICUM MYSTERIUM, n. 34; BOLETIN ECLESIASTICO DE FILIPINAS [BEF], 1967, p. 534).

Furthermore, the Bishops' Conference may adapt the actions and postures described in the Order of the Roman Mass to the usage of the people, but those adaptations must correspond to the character and meaning of each part of the celebration (IGRM, n. 21).



The general norm of the Roman Missal concerning the posture of the congregation at Mass is this:

“... at every Mass the faithful should stand from... the prayer over the gifts to the end of the Mass... But should kneel at the consecration, unless prevented by lack of space, large numbers or other reasonable cause” (IGRM, n. 21).

## 2. Local Legislation:

The general directives of the Roman Missal have been adapted to local needs and usage in the following manner:

a) “the people should kneel during the Eucharistic Prayer, from immediately after the *Sanctus* until the beginning of the doxology — *Through Him*. They must stand to receive the last blessing” (EPISCOPAL CONCLUSIONS, p. 36; CANON LAW DIGEST OF THE PHILIPPINE CATHOLIC CHURCH [CLDP], p. 47)

b) “the faithful should receive communion while kneeling; however, they keep standing if communion is received under both kinds” (LITURGICAL INFORMATION BULLETIN [LIB], 1967, 116; CLDP, 25).

In 1984, the Episcopal Commission on the Liturgy recommended some other changes which have not yet been acted upon by the Conference (COMMISSION ON THE LITURGY, n. 1921).

Moreover, a survey conducted by the same Commission reveals the following facts:

a) the practice in a majority of the territories — 25 out of 32 — and the preference of a majority of bishops — 23 out of 31 — is that the people kneel from after the *Sanctus* until the *Amen* after the *Per Ipsum*.

b) the most common practice among the respondent dioceses — 31 out of 33 — is to kneel after the *Agnus* or before

communion. Personally, a majority of the bishops — 30 out of 32 — prefer this arrangement.

c) in most places — 25 out of 30 — people do not kneel when when they receive Holy Communion. Majority of the bishops — 25 out of 29 — personally approve this practice. (COMMISSION ON LITURGY, n. 1921, Annex A).

### *3. Binding Force of Local Legislation:*

The results of the foregoing survey show a variety of practices and of opinions in the local church on the manner of receiving Holy Communion. Individual bishops do not seem to agree with the directives issued by the local Bishops' Conference. Aren't the decisions of the CBCP juridically binding in the country and especially on the bishop-members? In other words, can an individual bishop adopt or tolerate practices within his territory inconsistent with norms legitimately approved by the Conference for the entire nation?

Diocesan practices and policies, though at times inconsistent with norms of the Bishops' Conference, could still be lawful and binding on the faithful. This is due to the fact that only decisions approved by two-thirds of the voting members of the Conference and duly confirmed by Rome are juridically binding on the bishop-members. Decisions passed by simple majority represent the official stand of the Conference and deserves utmost consideration by each member in a spirit of solidarity, but they are not binding on the individual bishops, who can opt for other legitimate practices of their own choice. This explains the fact that while the faithful are able to receive communion standing in some places, in other regions they are asked to kneel. Both ways are possible and in accord with existing norms and customs.

When the faithful communicate kneeling, no other sign of reverence is required, since kneeling is itself a sign of adoration. When they receive communion standing, it is strongly

recommended that coming up in procession, they should make a sign of reverence before receiving the Sacrament. (EUCH. MYSTERIUM, n. 34).

#### 4. *Posture of the Faithful at Mass*

As a result of the adaptation of the general directives of the Roman Missal through local legislation, the posture to be maintained by the Filipino faithful at Mass should be as follows:

a) the people should stand:

from the beginning of the entrance song until the end of the opening prayer; for the singing of the alleluia before the gospel; while the gospel is proclaimed; during the profession of faith and the general intercessions; for the prayer over the gifts (IGRM, n. 21); they may also stand to receive the last blessing (CBCP, 1970; EPISCOPAL CONCLUSIONS, p. 36);

b) the people should sit:

during the readings before the gospel and during the responsorial psalm; for the homily and the preparation of the gifts at the offertory; after communion if there is a period of silence (IGRM, n. 21);

c) the people should kneel:

during the eucharistic prayer, from immediately after the *Sanctus* until the beginning of the doxology *Through Him* (CBCP, 1970; EPISC. CONCL., p. 36); while receiving communion, unless communion is received under both kinds, in which case it should be done standing (CBCP, 1967; LIB, 1967, p. 116).

## II. COMMUNION IN THE HAND OR IN THE TONGUE?

The mode of receiving communion is in itself less significant, nevertheless a sensitive issue which could generate

genuine pastoral problems. The double way of receiving communion — the hand or in the tongue — could be a case of perturbation to the spiritual sensibility of the communicant and may even become an occasion for disagreement among the faithful and with the ministers.

### 1. *Traditional Modes:*

The celebration and the reception of the Eucharist have taken various forms in the course of history in accord with man's spiritual and psychological needs. It is certainly true that ancient usage once allowed the faithful to take the eucharistic bread in their hands, to place it in their mouths and even to keep it in their homes. Communion in the hand was common to the whole Church for the first nine centuries. By the end of the first millennium, however, the distribution of communion was already becoming a privilege of the clerics. A testimony of the change is found in the decrees of the Council of Rouen (about 878) wherein it is prescribed: "let not the Eucharist be placed in the hand of any lay man or woman, but only in the mouth" (Bugnini, A., *Devotion and Respect for the Blessed Eucharist*, BEF, 1973, 381).

What was the reason or reasons for the change? Was it to avert or to prevent abuses or superstitious practices even at the expense of a greater participation of the faithful? Or was it motivated by a greater reverence to the Eucharist?

Abundant historical data show that the care and ministry of the Eucharist was, by now, especially committed to sacred ministers or to men especially designated for this purpose to ensure the respect due to the sacrament and to meet the needs of the people (Instr., MEMORABLE DOMINI; Flannery, A., VATICAN COUNCIL II, p. 149). Thus while communion in the hand fell into disuse, communion in the tongue was generalized and eventually became the only way of receiving the Eucharist (Bugnini, A., l.c., p. 386).

## *2. Restoration of the Ancient Usage:*

A desire to return to the old practice was manifested in many local churches since Vatican II laid the ground for a pluralism of forms and expressions of worship. Soon, communion in the hand became a widespread practice. It was easy, however, to give it canonical legitimacy since communion on the tongue was still a deeply rooted custom with force of law. A recourse to the Apostolic See became necessary asking for directives and possibly for a reform of existing laws.

A change in a matter of such moment, based on a most ancient and venerable tradition, required study and consultation with the individual bishops around the world. Strange enough, only a third of the episcopate was in favor of communion in the hand. A sudden change of discipline on this matter would, therefore, be offensive to the sentiments and spiritual culture of a vast majority of the bishops and of the faithful. Hence, communion in the tongue was once more confirmed as the universal law of the Church.

What about the local Churches wherein the custom of receiving communion in the hand was already well established? Was the practice to be stopped as something contrary to approved rules and customs? Not so, The retention of the practice was possible as long as it was approved in sacred balloting by two-thirds of the bishops with voting rights and confirmed by Rome. Thus, a new norm emerged which is presently in force in the universal Church:

"In the distribution of communion the custom of placing the consecrated bread in the tongue of the communicants should be maintained, since it is based on a traditional practice of several centuries;

Nevertheless, episcopal conferences may declare, with confirmation of the decision by the Apostolic See, that communion may also be given in their territory by placing the



consecrated bread in the hands of the faithful, provided that precautions are taken against danger of insufficient reverence, or false doctrines about the Eucharist arising in the mind of the faithful" (ROMAN RITUAL, n. 21).

### *3. Local Legislation*

The CBCP tried in four occasions to introduce communion in the hand on a national level and four times it did fail.

In February 1971, more than half of the bishops rejected communion in the hand for the people in general; for small, homogenous groups the voting was close, but still short of the required two-thirds majority (EPISCOPAL CONCLUSIONS, p. 39).

A second attempt was made in February 1973. The Conference garnered this time three-fourths of the votes of those present and represented, but failed anew to get the two-thirds of those with voting rights in a secret balloting (LIB, p. 44).

In July 1973, the bishops intended to settle the matter once and for all, but again the Conference failed to get the required two-third votes. The Conference, however, unanimously approved a resolution to request Rome permission to introduce communion in the hand on an experimental basis for two years. The request was not granted: "the SCW cannot neglect the expression of the will of the bishops in this matter, as expressed by their voting (SCW, 24 August 1973; Prot., n. 479/73; EPISCOPAL CONCLUSIONS, p. 44).

A last effort for optional communion in the hand failed anew in July 1984 (BEF, 1979, 6; CLDP, 25).

Various reasons could possibly be advanced for the opposition of a majority of the local bishops to the practice of communion in the hand. But as long as the Conference fails to pass a decision to change the existing norm, communion in the tongue will remain the only approved way of receiving communion in the country as restated in the Revised Roman Ritual.

A survey conducted in 1984 by the Episcopal Commission on the Liturgy showed no significant changes on the matter as may be gleaned from the following results:

- Communion on the tongue is by far the most common practice in the various dioceses — 26 against 6;
- the bishops are equally divided as to whether the way of receiving communion should be left to the communicant — 15 against 15;
- the personal view of the bishops slightly favors the traditional communion on the tongue practice — 19 against 14.

In fine, the atmosphere in 1984 did not yet seem conducive to change. Logically the Episcopal Commission on Liturgy recommended that the issue be not yet presented to the bishops for decision (COMMISSION ON LITURGY, n. 1921, Annex A).

#### *4. Binding Force of Local Legislation*

Inasmuch as communion on the tongue is still the only approved mode for the entire country, what is the minister to do when a communicant, in good faith or out of conviction or habit, extends his hand to receive the eucharistic bread? Can an individual bishop tolerate or approve communion in the hand for a time and for purposes of experimentation within his territory?

Obviously, the bishop who approves or even tolerates a practice contrary to the general policy of the local church within his territory is not acting in conformity with law. As already pointed out, the approval of two-thirds of the bishops with voting rights is a requisite to effect a change in the mode of receiving communion in the country. In a particular case and for the good of the faithful, the bishop could dispense from this rule, but such dispensation could not be extended to the whole diocese even on experimental basis.

Ministers of the Eucharist, too, should exert effort to comply with existing laws and administer communion in the tongue, not because this mode is based on ancient custom, but rather because it expresses the faithful's reverence for the Eucharist.

The request of a communicant to receive the sacrament in a way contrary to approved common usage deserves keen discernment and utmost prudence by the priest or minister. In the process of arriving to an acceptable solution the priest will do well in recalling that any baptized person not prohibited by law can and must be admitted to Holy Communion (c. 912). On the other hand, only those who obstinately persevere in a manifest grave sin are to be excluded from the sacrament (c. 915).

### III. CELEBRATION OF THE EUCHARIST OUTSIDE A SACRED PLACE

The early Christians used to gather in private homes and places for the eucharistic celebration (ACTS, 2, 46; 20, 7-8). The custom of saying the Mass in a sacred place was introduced sometime in the third century when the Christian community had reasserted itself in a pagan world and had the material means to erect churches or places dedicated to divine worship.

#### 1. *The General Rule:*

The general rule for the latin church still follows the same old pattern, to wit:

"The celebration of the Eucharist is to be performed in a sacred place... upon a dedicated or blessed altar" (c. 932). Indeed, the respect and reverence due to the Holy Eucharist demand that the Mass be normally celebrated in places assigned to divine cult or worship by dedication or blessing (c. 1205), namely churches (c. 1219) and oratories (c. 1225) which are

the customary places of worship of the community, and private chapels (c. 1228) with permission from the local ordinary.

In places of worship, the altar or table on which the Eucharist is celebrated may be *fixed* or *movable* and should likewise be dedicated or blessed according to prescribed rites (cc. 1235; 1237).

## 2. *Exceptions to the Rule:*

There are, of course, exceptions to the general rule. In fact existing laws allow the celebration of Mass outside churches or oratories without a dispensation or permission from the local ordinary. This is possible only when in a particular case necessity demands otherwise and on condition that the place of celebration be becoming (c. 932,1).

a) Churches, oratories or other places assigned to divine cult are the normal places of worship of the Christian community. Hence, Masses said outside of such places are to be regarded as *abnormal* and should be held rather rarely, this is, in particular cases and for special valid reasons. The faithful should regularly attend Mass with the entire local community in places of worship to promote the life and unity of the congregation.

"A particular case" does not exclusively refer to a single occasion or sacred action, and could also include a regular affair performed out of a place of worship for a special, valid reason, such as sickness, old age, distance from the church, etc.

b) The pastoral or spiritual welfare of the Christian community and of the individual faithful is to be considered in order to establish the existence of real necessity for the celebration of the Eucharist out of a sacred place.

With the spiritual advantage of the community of the faithful as a rule of thumb, the celebration of Masses out of places

of worship could be justified in instances such as the following: in sickness, old age, difficulty or inconvenience of access to the church as usually happens in group retreats, school homecomings, prayer gatherings, seminars, meetings of the lay apostolate such as cursillos, marriage encounters, neo-catechumenal and charismatic groups, etc.

One can hardly imagine a situation in which the spiritual or pastoral good of the congregation or group of faithful will not be at stake one way or another.

c) As to the site wherein the Mass may be said in special cases, there is no limitation other than the place be becoming or fitting (*loco honesto*). Thus, as long as in the opinion of the celebrant the place meets that standard of suitability, the Mass may be celebrated practically in any place, vgr. in private homes, funeral homes, bedrooms, penal institutions, hospital rooms of suites, classrooms, auditoria, conference halls, . . . even in the open air, on shipboards and spaceship.

The criterion to determine whether a place is suitable enough for the celebration of the Eucharist should not just be based on the physical outlook of the building, its artistic or historical value nor even on the name or fame of a given family. Instead that place is to be considered fitting for the celebration which fosters the respect to and dignity of the Holy Eucharist and does not unduly hinder the participation or attentiveness of the people as a result of undesirable distractions (IGRM, n. 253).

### 3. *The Task of the Local Ordinary:*

The liberal tenor of existing norms greatly restrict the option of the local ordinary who may wish to enforce a more conservative stand on the matter.

Passing judgment on the existence of pastoral reasons, which may warrant the celebration out of a sacred place in a given instance, is the concern of the celebrant. Hence, the



prospective celebrant does not need to secure the local ordinary's permission whenever, in his honest opinion, there exists a cogent pastoral reason to say Mass out of a church or oratory as long as the place is deemed becoming for the celebration.

What then, can local ordinaries do on this matter? Through local legislation and acting within the framework of common law, bishops could well set specific rules establishing, for instance, the conditions for a place to be considered suitable for the eucharistic celebration, or pointing out occasions or situations when the celebration of Mass out of the church could be amply justified for pastoral reasons.

Particular legislation should preferably set a common pattern for the entire nation or region.

#### *4. Local Legislation:*

The indiscriminate celebration of Masses out of customary places of worship could easily disrupt the unity of the parish or local community and put pastors under pressure. Some restrictions are, therefore, in order to check the unwanted proliferation of this type of Masses and subsequent abusive practices.

To this effect, the CBCP has already drafted a set of guidelines for Home Masses and Masses for Small Groups which have not yet been confirmed by Rome. The proposed rules are as follows:

— For celebrations outside churches or chapels, the permission is to be given by the bishop, upon the recommendation of the parish priest, and for the use of the facilities of religious by the religious superior.

— Unless there are cogent pastoral reasons for it, Masses for special, small groups, especially in private homes, should

not be held on Sundays and holy days of obligation, for the same reason that normally on the Lord's day people belong to the parish community.

— The regulation of home Masses for the dead during the wake is left to the pastoral judgment of the bishop. Masses in the chapels of funerarias are generally to be discouraged and need each time the permission of the bishop.

— Home Masses for a particular family only at occasions like birthdays, wedding anniversaries, family reunions and the like should be banned and oriented towards the parish. An exception to the previous rule is a Mass in their home for those who have been sick for some time. This is a very sensitive time for the whole family, and it is good for the Church to show its concern for the suffering members of Christ.

FR. FLORENCIO TESTERA, O.P.

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DOUBTS  
and PRAISES

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With the advent of new methods of psychospiritual processes and other modern psychological techniques, new formators accept their assignments not without much reluctance or feelings of insecurity unless they have been properly trained according to these modern techniques and discoveries.

Being a formator is no easy task; the responsibility it entails is far-reaching and the demands it makes on the formator is simply tremendous.

Rev. Alex A. Meñez of the Diocese of Kalibo, who now lives in the community with twenty Second Year Theologians from the Western Visayas region, must have found himself in a difficult situation in March 1985 when he was assigned to be the Formator of the Formation Year. He had no program, nor speakers, nor resource persons to bank on.

Nonetheless, he accepted the assignment albeit with much hesitancy and trepidation. And it was during these moments of hesitancy and fear that he felt the assurance of God's assistance. It dawned on him that, precisely, he should have no program but should only have to be vigilant to the Holy Spirit

unfold His program moment by moment. He realized and understood that the program is NAZARETH: the hidden life of Jesus in obscure Nazareth.

In his article (cfr. BOLETIN ECLESIASTICO, May-June 1986), Fr. Meñez discussed the five basic points which will serve as the guidelines of the Program. These were: 1. Obscurity; 2. Monotony; 3. Family Life and Poverty; 4. Work; and 5. Prayer and Experience of Church. He also included the criteria for the success of the Program and some points on the Model of Losing.

Since then, various reactions have been expressed regarding the article. In general, the comments were in agreement with the author's opinions on the program of formation based on the five basic guidelines; however, a few were not as optimistic as the author regarding certain aspects of the program and saw the need for more clarifications.

A reader from Our Lady of Grace Church in New York sent a detailed criticism of the whole program and dwelt on topics regarding the relationship existing among the bishop, the seminary, and the family; the experience with Church; modelling; the criteria for success; and obscurity and monotony.

The critic saw in the three elements composed of the bishop, the seminary, and the family, not a mere juxtaposition but rather, the integral parts of a whole:

#### "ON THE CYCLE: SEMINARY, FAMILY, BISHOP

The activities (of students) in the seminary appear to be cohesive, organized, and directive. I presume that that there are sets of supportive activities when the students spend some time with their families and respective bishops. I would also presume that the families and bishops are adequately oriented and prepared to be a part of this program. What I see here is not a mere *juxtaposition* of the three: seminary, family, bishop — they are the *integral* elements, the parts of

the whole. Given this consideration, all activities in the seminary must find a balanced supportive activities in the family and in the bishop. (*One thing is to live with the family and with the bishop; another thing is to live with them well and fruitfully*).

#### "ON THE EXPERIENCE WITH CHURCH

You have given three structures or models of the Church: bishop, religious orders, and the christi-fideles. There seems to be a lacuna, a hiatus here. Notably missing is the community of the presbyteratus, our own brother priests. If you can justify the inclusion of religious orders and institutes as living models or structures, you will be burdened to justify your exclusion of the community of the local presbyteratus as a part of the Church experience. What I foresee here is the future disadvantage the seminarians will be plunged into after getting ordained. Since there is no linkage between them and the local presbyterate they will find themselves alienated and isolated when they begin their ministry. The local priests can also serve as models or affirmers of the values of Jesus Christ.

#### "ON MODELLING

There seems to be a unilateral projection of the person of the director. I would suggest that the concept of modelling be not too constricted but wide and open-ended. Everyone in the community has some modelling to do. Modelling does not always means perfection — it can also mean our own fragility and brokenness.

#### "ON CRITERIA FOR SUCCESS

I think the logical criteria will be ontological — if the program is to stay, to endure, and to bear fruit.



## "ON OBSCURITY AND MONOTONY

I am in total agreement with the spirit of the program; I have some difficulty with the semantics. These gentlemen can never be obscure; they are visible in their faith, in their prayers, in their charity. Like the early Christians — they are a community of charity. When they work (here work never becomes menial but dignified) they are the visible agents of the gospel. When we work, play, study, the Spirit is always with us. He is the spirit of joy, activity, goodness, etc. Personally, the terms 'obscurity' and 'monotony' signify lifelessness and staleness. I would prefer the terms that would signify vitality and activity. Again let me tell you that this is only a problem of semantics.

Let me sincerely admire and congratulate you for the initiatives you have done for the formation of priests. This is a super program — it is almost like the Rule of St. Benedict, or the way of St. Francis.

I have a strong concern, though, with the cycles. What you may be doing in the seminary for the students may not find a proportionate rhythm in the family and in the bishop. I would strongly suggest that you make contact with the family and bishops — not merely through letters — you have to talk to them, make them feel and act, to share in the formation. You are not the whole — you are only a part, as they are also parts, vital parts. When a part of the whole does not work or respond, you will be greatly handicapped — the program will collapse ultimately."

However, a chaplain from Baguio is not as enthusiastic, and says that:

"This morning I read your article on Formation in the Boletín Eclesiástico which arrived yesterday. My heartiest and very sincere congratulations. I only wish that it would be taken seriously by seminaries, but I think their thinking goes in lines that are quite far

apart from your suggestions. How do we explain the result of many young, newly ordained priests, who do not spend time at prayer or meditation, who will not accept work given to them unless they like it. And some of them are soon running after a different kind of life although they have had some 13 or 14 years of preparation for the priestly vocation! The root cause is formation. I wish you God's choicest blessings and Mary's motherly help. I have been occupied in teaching Scriptures for 47 years in several countries, and many of these years have been spent in formation work. Nazareth was a true light you received from the Lord. Carry it out. But I think some 90% of our bishops will evade your suggestion to live with some seminarians for a while: too busy, no money, age gap, etc., etc. I do hope our formators... read your article and adopt it. More power to you!"

For a religious sister from Manila, Jesus is the model of Religious Life and if He is the center of life of the seminarians. She believes that there is no need to be imbued with the prayer life and spirituality of the Trappists and the Carmelites, rather, seminarians should be familiar with the Bible, the life of Christ and be formed just as Christ was:

"It seems to me that there is no need for the seminarians to live for a few days with Trappist Monks and be with Carmel nuns to get some of their spirituality and their prayer life. If Jesus is the center of life of the seminarians, then there is no need to get the 'Prayer Life' and the spirituality of the Trappist Monks and Carmel Nuns because Jesus is the model of the 'Religious Life'. Seminarians should be familiar with the Bible, the life of Christ, and be Christ-like as Jesus is the way, the truth and the life, the model of the religious and of priests. The practice of virtues is very important in the life of seminarians especially self-abnegation or humility, as Jesus said, 'Learn from me for I am meek and humble of heart and you will find rest in your heart.' The Life of Christ as

model of all things is also the source of all things needed in the Formation Year of seminarians as Jesus is the best teacher in the spiritual life...

"I agree with you that there should be no activity during FY in the parish. Formation should come first, then activity or apostolate. In the Formation Year, seminarians should have a solid foundation of prayer-life or interior life for without it, spiritual life will fall. Prayer is nourishment to the soul as food is to the body. It seems to me that nowadays the members of the Church are being carried by the wave of secularization. I think this is the reason why there is a crisis of vocation to the priesthood and religious life. This is because of the crisis of faith in the family and society. How could we produce vocation if there is no 'Christian Living' in the family life. If only there will be family Christian living, there will be no crisis of vocation to the priesthood and religious life the world over..."

In March 1985, one reluctant Formator found himself with a new kind of responsibility and he must have felt so alone for he had no expertise whatsoever in the field of formation.

A year or so after sharing the insights gained from his own experiences as a struggling formator, he finds that he was not and is never alone.

FR. VICENTE CAJILIG, O.P.

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ENCYCLICAL LETTER  
**DOMINUM ET VIVIFICANTEM**  
OF THE SUPREME PONTIFF  
**JOHN PAUL II**  
ON THE HOLY SPIRIT  
IN THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH  
AND THE WORLD

PART III

THE SPIRIT WHO GIVES LIFE

**1. Reason for the Jubilee of the Year 2000:  
Christ who was conceived of the Holy Spirit**

49. *The Church's mind and heart turn to the Holy Spirit as this twentieth century draws to a close and the third Millennium since the coming of Jesus Christ into the world approaches, and as we look towards the great Jubilee with which the Church will celebrate the event. For according to the computation of time this coming is measured as an event belonging to the history of man on earth. The measurement of time in common use defines years, centuries and millennia according to whether they come before or after the birth of Christ. But it must also be remembered that for us Christians this event indicates, as Saint Paul says, the "fullness of time",<sup>193</sup> because in it human history has been wholly permeated by the "measurement" of God himself: a transcendent presence of the "eternal now". He "who is, who was, and who is to come"; he who is "the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end".<sup>194</sup> "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life".<sup>195</sup> "When the time had fully come, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman... so that we might receive adoption as sons".<sup>196</sup> And this Incarnation of the Son-Word came about "by the power of the Holy Spirit".*

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<sup>193</sup> Cf. Gal. 4:4.

<sup>194</sup> Rev. 1:8; 22:13.

<sup>195</sup> Jn. 3:16.

<sup>196</sup> Gal. 4:4 f.

The two Evangelists to whom we owe the narrative of the birth and infancy of Jesus of Nazareth express themselves on this matter in an identical way. According to *Luke*, at the Annunciation of the birth of Jesus, Mary asks: "How shall this be, since I have no husband?", and she receives this answer: "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you: therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God".<sup>197</sup>

*Matthew* narrates directly: "Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child of the Holy Spirit".<sup>198</sup> Disturbed by this turn of events, Joseph receives the following explanation in a dream: "Do not fear to take Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit; she will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins".<sup>199</sup>

Thus from the beginning the Church confesses *the mystery of the Incarnation*, this key-mystery of the faith, by *making reference to the Holy Spirit*. The *Apostles' Creed* says: "He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary". Similarly, the *Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed* professes: "By the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man".

"By the power of the Holy Spirit" there became man he whom the Church, in the words of the same Creed, professes to be the Son, of the same substance as the Father: "*God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made*". He was made man by becoming "incarnate from the Virgin Mary". This is what happened when "the fullness of time had come".

50. The *great Jubilee* at the close of the second Millennium, for which the Church is already preparing, has a directly *Christological aspect*: for it is a celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ. At the same time it has a *pneumatological aspect*, since the mystery of the Incarnation was accomplished "by the power of the Holy Spirit". It was "brought about" by that Spirit — consubstantial with the Father and the Son — who, in the absolute mystery of the Triune God, is the Person-love, the uncreated

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<sup>197</sup> *Lk.* 1:34 f.

<sup>198</sup> *Mt.* 1:18.

<sup>199</sup> *Mt.* 1:20 f.



gift, who is the eternal source of every gift that comes from God in the order of creation, the direct principle and, in a certain sense, the subject of God's self-communication in the order of grace. *The mystery of the Incarnation constitutes the climax of this giving, this divine self-communication.*

The conception and birth of Jesus Christ are in fact the greatest work accomplished by the Holy Spirit in the history of creation and salvation: the supreme grace — "the grace of union", source of every other grace, as Saint Thomas explains.<sup>200</sup> The great Jubilee refers to this work and also — if we penetrate its depths — to the author of this work, *to the person of the Holy Spirit.*

For the "fullness of time" is matched by a particular fullness of the self-communication of the Triune God in the Holy Spirit. "By the power of the Holy Spirit" the mystery of the "*hypostatic union*" is brought about — that is, the union of the divine nature and the human nature, of the divinity and the humanity in the one Person of the Word-Son. When at the moment of the Annunciation Mary utters her "fiat": "Be it done unto me according to your word",<sup>201</sup> she conceives in a virginal way a man the Son of Man, *who is the Son of God.* By means of this "humanization" of the Word-Son the self-communication of God reaches its definitive fullness in the history of creation and salvation. This fullness acquires a special wealth and expressiveness in the text of John's Gospel: "The Word became flesh".<sup>202</sup> The Incarnation of God the Son signifies the taking up into unity with God not only of human nature, but in *this human nature, in a sense, of everything that is "flesh"*: the whole of humanity, the entire visible and material world. The Incarnation, then, also has a cosmic significance, a cosmic dimension. The "first-born of all creation",<sup>203</sup> becoming incarnate in the individual humanity of Christ, unites himself in some way with the entire reality of man, which is also "flesh"<sup>204</sup> — and in this reality with all "flesh", with the whole of creation.

51. All this is accomplished by the power of the Holy Spirit, and so is part of the great Jubilee to come. The Church can-

<sup>200</sup> Cf. ST. THOMAS AQUINAS, *Summa Theol.* IIIa, q. 2, aa. 10-12; q. 6, q. 7, a. 13.

<sup>201</sup> *Lk.* 1:38.

<sup>202</sup> *Jn.* 1:14.

<sup>203</sup> *Col.* 1:15.

<sup>204</sup> Cf. for example, *Gen.* 9:11; *Deut.* 5:26; *Job* 34:15; *Is.* 40:6; 42:10; *Ps.* 145/144:21; *Lk.* 3:6; 1 *Pet.* 1:24.

not *prepare* for the Jubilee in any other way than in the *Holy Spirit*. What was accomplished by the power of the Holy Spirit "in the fullness of time" can only through the Spirit's power now emerge from the memory of the Church. By his power it can be made present in the new phase of man's history on earth: the year 2000 from the birth of Christ.

The Holy Spirit, who with his power overshadowed the virginal body of *Mary*, bringing about in her *the beginning of her divine Motherhood*, at the same time made her heart perfectly obedient to that self-communication of God which surpassed every human idea and faculty. "Blessed is she who believed!"<sup>205</sup> thus Mary is greeted by her cousin Elizabeth, herself "full of the Holy Spirit".<sup>206</sup> In the words of greeting addressed to her "*who believed*" we seem to detect a distant (but in fact very close) contrast with all those about whom Christ will say that "they do not believe".<sup>207</sup> Mary entered the history of the salvation of the world through the obedience of faith. And *faith*, in its deepest essence, is *the openness* of the human heart to the gift: *to God's self-communication in the Holy Spirit*. Saint Paul writes: "The Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom".<sup>208</sup> When the Triune God opens himself to man in the Holy Spirit, this opening of God reveals and also gives to the human creature the fullness of freedom. This fullness was manifested in a sublime way precisely through the faith of Mary, through the "obedience of faith":<sup>209</sup> truly, "Blessed is she who believed"!

## **2. Reason for the Jubilee: grace has been made manifest**

52. In the mystery of the Incarnation the *work of the Spirit "who gives life"* reaches its highest point. It is not possible to give life, which in its fullest form is in God, except by making it the life of *a Man*, as Christ is in his humanity endowed with personhood by the Word in the hypostatic union. And at the same time, with the mystery of the Incarnation there opens in a new way *the source of this divine life in the history of mankind*: the Holy Spirit. The Word, "the first-born of many

<sup>205</sup> Lk. 1:45.

<sup>206</sup> Cf. Lk. 1:41.

<sup>207</sup> Cf. Jn. 16:9.

<sup>208</sup> 2 Cor. 3:17.

<sup>209</sup> Cf. Rom. 1:5.

brethren".<sup>210</sup> And thus he also becomes the head of the Body which is the Church, which will be born on the Cross and revealed on the day of Pentecost — and in the Church, he becomes the head of humanity: of the people of every nation, every race, every country and culture, every language and continent, all called to salvation. "The Word became flesh, (that Word in whom) *was life* and the life was the light of men — *to all* who received him *he gave the power to become the children of God*".<sup>211</sup> But all this was accomplished and is unceasingly accomplished "by the power of the Holy Spirit".

For as Saint Paul teaches, "*all who are led by the Spirit of God*" are "*children of God*".<sup>212</sup> The filiation of divine adoption is born in man on the basis of the mystery of the Incarnation, therefore through Christ the eternal Son. But the birth, or rebirth, happens "*when God the Father "sends the Spirit of his Son into our hearts"*".<sup>213</sup> Then "we receive a spirit of adopted sons by which we cry 'Abba, Father!' ".<sup>214</sup> Hence the divine filiation planted in the human soul through sanctifying grace is the work of the Holy Spirit. "It is the Spirit himself bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, *heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ*".<sup>215</sup> Sanctifying grace is the principle and source of of man's new life: divine, supernatural life.

The giving of this new life is as it were God's definitive answer to the Psalmist's words which in a way echo the voice of all creatures: "When you send forth your Spirit, they shall be created; and you shall renew the face of the earth".<sup>216</sup> He who in the mystery of creation *gives life* to man and the cosmos in its many different forms, visible and invisible, again *renews* this life through the mystery of the Incarnation. Creation is thus completed by the Incarnation and since that moment is permeated by the powers of the Redemption, powers which fill humanity and all creation. This is what we are told by Saint Paul, whose cosmic and theological vision seems to repeat the words of the ancient Psalm: creation "*waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God*",<sup>217</sup> that is, those whom God has "foreknown" and whom he "has predestined to be con-

<sup>210</sup> Rom. 8:29.

<sup>211</sup> Cf. Jn. 1:14. 4. 12f.

<sup>212</sup> Cf. Rom. 8:14.

<sup>213</sup> Cf. Gal. 4:6; Rom. 5:5; 2 Cor. 1:22.

<sup>214</sup> Rom. 8:15.

<sup>215</sup> Rom. 8:16f.

<sup>216</sup> Cf. Ps. 104/103:30.

<sup>217</sup> Rom. 8:19.

formed to the image of his Son".<sup>218</sup> Thus there is a supernatural "adoption", of which the source is the Holy Spirit, love and gift. *As such he is given to man.* And in the *superabundance of the uncreated gift there begins* in the heart of all human beings that particular *created gift* whereby they "become partakers of the divine nature".<sup>219</sup> Thus human life becomes permeated, through participation, by the divine life, and itself acquires a divine, supernatural dimension. There is granted the *new life*, in which as a sharer in the mystery of Incarnation "man has access to the Father in the Holy Spirit".<sup>220</sup> Thus there is a close relationship *between the Spirit* who gives life and *sanctifying grace* and the manifold *supernatural vitality* which derives from it in man: between the uncreated Spirit and the created human spirit.

53. *All this* may be said to fall within the scope of the *great Jubilee* mentioned above. For we must go beyond the historical dimension of the event considered in its surface value. Through the Christological content of the event we have to reach the pneumatological dimension, seeing with the eyes of faith the *two thousand years of the action of the Spirit of truth*, who down the centuries has drawn from the treasures of the Redemption achieved by Christ and given new life to human beings, bringing about in them adoption in the only begotten Son, sanctifying them, so that they can repeat with Saint Paul: "We have received... the Spirit which is from God".<sup>221</sup>

But as we follow this reason for the Jubilee, we cannot limit ourselves to the two thousand years which have passed since the birth of Christ. *We need to go further back*, to embrace the whole of the action of the Holy Spirit even before Christ — *from the beginning*, throughout the world, and especially in the economy of the Old Covenant. For this action has been exercised, in every place and at every time, indeed in every individual, according to the eternal plan of salvation, whereby this action was to be closely linked with the mystery of the Incarnation and Redemption, which in its turn exercised its influence on those who believed in the future coming of Christ. This is attested to especially in the *Letter to the Ephesians*.<sup>222</sup> Grace, therefore, bears within itself both a Christological aspect

<sup>218</sup> Rom. 8:29.

<sup>219</sup> Cf. 2 Pet. 1:4.

<sup>220</sup> Cf. Eph. 2:18; Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation *Dei Verbum*, 2.

<sup>221</sup> Cf. 1 Cor. 2:12

<sup>222</sup> Cf. Eph. 1:3-14.

and a pneumatological one, which becomes evident above all in those who expressly accept Christ: "In him (in Christ) you... were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, which is the guarantee of our inheritance, until we acquire possession of it".<sup>223</sup>

But, still within the perspective of the great Jubilee, we need to look further and go further afield, knowing that "the wind blows where it wills", according to the image used by Jesus in his conversation with Nicodemus.<sup>224</sup> The Second Vatican Council, centered primarily on the theme of the Church, reminds us of the Holy Spirit's activity also "*outside the visible body of the Church*". The Council speaks precisely of "all people of good will in whose hearts grace works in an unseen way. For, since Christ died for all, and since the ultimate vocation of man is in fact one, and divine, we ought to believe that the Holy Spirit in a manner known only to God offers to every man the possibility of being associated with this paschal mystery".<sup>225</sup>

54. "God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship *in spirit and truth*".<sup>226</sup> These words were spoken by Jesus in another conversation, the one with the Samaritan woman. The great Jubilee to be celebrated at the end of this Millennium and at the beginning of the next ought to constitute a powerful call to all those who "worship God in spirit and truth". It should be for everyone a special occasion for meditating on the mystery of the Triune God, who *in himself is wholly transcendent* with regard to the world, especially the visible world. For he is absolute Spirit, "God is spirit";<sup>227</sup> and also, in such a marvellous way, he is not only *close to this world* but *present* in it, and in a sense *immanent*, penetrating it and giving it life from within. This is especially true in relation to man: God is present in the intimacy of man's being, in his mind, conscience and heart: an ontological and psychological reality, in considering which Saint Augustine said of God that he was "*closer than my inmost being*".<sup>228</sup> These words help us to understand better the words of Jesus to the Samaritan woman: "God is spirit". Only the Spirit can be "*closer than my inmost being*", both in my existence and in my spiritual experience. Only the Spirit

<sup>223</sup> Eph. 1:13f.

<sup>224</sup> Cf. Jn. 3:8

<sup>225</sup> Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World *Gaudium et Spes*, 22; cf. Dogmatic Constitution on the Church *Lumen Gentium*, 16.

<sup>226</sup> Jn. 4:24.

<sup>227</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>228</sup> Cf. ST. AUGUSTINE, *Confess.* III, 6, 11: CCL 27, 33.



can be so immanent in man and in the world, while remaining inviolable and immutable in his absolute transcendence.

But in Jesus Christ the divine presence in the world and in man has been made manifest in a new way and in visible form. In him "the grace of God has appeared indeed".<sup>229</sup> The love of God the Father, as a gift, infinite grace, source of life, has been made visible in Christ, and in his humanity that love has become "part" of the universe, the human family and history. This appearing of grace in human history, through Jesus Christ, has been accomplished through the power of the Holy Spirit, who is the *source of all God's salvific activity in the world*: he, the "hidden God",<sup>230</sup> who as love and gift "fills the universe".<sup>231</sup> The Church's entire life, as will appear in the great Jubilee, means going to meet the invisible God, the hidden God: a meeting with the Spirit "who gives life".

**3. The Holy Spirit in man's inner conflict:  
"For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit,  
and the desire of the Spirit are against the flesh"**

55. Unfortunately, the history of salvation shows that God's coming close and making himself present to man and the world, that marvellous "condescension" of the Spirit, *meets with resistance and opposition* in our human reality. How eloquent from this point of view are the prophetic words of the old man Simeon who, inspired by the Spirit, came to the Temple in Jerusalem, in order to foretell in the presence of the new-born Babe of Bethlehem that he "is set for the fall and rising of many in Israel, for a *sign of contradiction*".<sup>232</sup> Opposition to God, who is an invisible Spirit, to a certain degree originates in the very fact of the radical difference of the world from God, that is to say in the world's "visibility" and "absolute Spirit"; from the world's essential and inevitable imperfection in contrast to him, the perfect being. But this opposition becomes conflict and rebellion on the ethical plane by reason of that *sin* which takes possession of the *human heart*, wherein "the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh".<sup>233</sup> Concerning this sin, the Holy Spirit must "convince the world" as we have already said.

<sup>229</sup> Cf. *Tit.* 2:11.

<sup>230</sup> Cf. *Is.* 45:15.

<sup>231</sup> Cf. *Wis.* 1:7.

<sup>232</sup> *Lk.* 2:27. 34.

<sup>233</sup> *Gal.* 5:17.

It is Saint Paul who describes in a particularly eloquent way the tension and struggle that trouble the human heart. We read in the *Letter to the Galatians*: "But I say, *walk by the Spirit, and do not gratify the desires of the flesh*. For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh; for these are opposed to each other, to prevent you from doing what you would".<sup>234</sup> There already exists in man, as a *being made up* of body and spirit, a certain tension, a certain struggle of tendencies between the "spirit" and the "flesh". But this struggle in fact belongs to the heritage of sin, is a consequence of sin and at the same time a confirmation of it. This is part of everyday experience. As the Apostle writes: "*Now the works of the flesh* are plain: fornication, impurity, licentiousness . . . drunkenness, carousing and the like". These are the sins that could be called "carnal". But he also adds others: "Enmity, strife, jealousy, anger, selfishness, dissension, party spirit, envy".<sup>235</sup> All of this constitutes the "works of the flesh".

But with these works, which are undoubtedly evil, Paul contrasts "the fruit of the Spirit", such as "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control".<sup>236</sup> From the context it is clear that for the Apostle it is not a question of discriminating against and condemning the body, which with the spiritual soul constitutes man's nature and personal subjectivity. Rather, he is concerned with the morally *good or bad works*, or better the permanent dispositions — virtues and vices — which are the *fruit of submission* to (in the first case) of *resistance* to (in the second case) *the saving action of the Holy Spirit*. Consequently the Apostle writes: "If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit".<sup>237</sup> And in other passages: "For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit"; "You are in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you".<sup>238</sup> The contrast that Saint Paul makes between life "according to the Spirit" and life "according to the flesh" gives rise to a further contrast: *that between "life" and "death"*. "To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace"; hence the warning: "For if you

<sup>234</sup> *Gal.* 5:16f.

<sup>235</sup> Cf. *Gal.* 5:19-21.

<sup>236</sup> *Gal.* 5:22f.

<sup>237</sup> *Gal.* 5:25.

<sup>238</sup> Cf. *Rom.* 8:5. 9.

live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body you will live".<sup>239</sup>

Properly understood, this is an *exhortation to live in the truth*, that is, according to the dictates of an upright conscience, and at the same time it is a profession of faith in the Spirit of truth as the one who gives life. For the body is "dead because of sin, but your spirits are alive because of righteousness". "So then, brethren, we are *debtors, not to the flesh*, to live according to the flesh".<sup>240</sup> Rather we are debtors to *Christ*, who in the Paschal Mystery has effected our justification, obtaining for us the Holy Spirit: "Indeed, we have been bought at a great price".<sup>241</sup>

In the texts of Saint Paul there is a super-imposing — and a mutual compenetration — of the *ontological dimension* (the flesh and the spirit) the *ethical* (moral good and evil), and the *pneumatological* (the action of the Holy Spirit in the order of grace). His words (especially in the *Letters to the Romans* and *Galatians*) enable us to know and feel vividly the strength of the tension and struggle going on in man between openness to the action of the Holy Spirit and resistance and opposition to him, to his saving gift. The terms or poles of contrast are, on man's part, his limitation and sinfulness, which are essential elements of his psychological and ethical reality; and on God's part, *the mystery of the gift*, that unceasing self-giving of divine life in the Holy Spirit. Who will win? The one who welcomes the gift.

56. Unfortunately, the resistance to the Holy Spirit which Saint Paul emphasizes in the *interior and subjective dimension* as tension, struggle and rebellion taking place in the human heart finds in every period of history and especially in the modern era its *external dimension*, which takes concrete form as the content of culture and civilization, as a *philosophical system, an ideology, a programme* for action and for the shaping of human behaviour. It reaches its clearest expression in *materialism*, both in its theoretical form: as a system of thought, and in its practical form: as a method of interpreting and evaluating facts, and likewise as a programme of corresponding conduct. The system which has developed most and carried to its extreme practical consequences this form of thought, ideology and praxis is dialectical and historical materialism, which is still recognized as the essential core of Marxism.

<sup>239</sup> Rom. 8:6. 13.

<sup>240</sup> Rom. 8:10. 12.

<sup>241</sup> Cf. 1 Cor. 6:20.

In principle and in fact, materialism radically *excludes* the presence and action of God, who is spirit, in the world and above all in man. Fundamentally, this is because it *does not accept God's existence*, being a system that is essentially and systematically atheistic. This is the striking phenomenon of our time: atheism, to which the Second Vatican Council devoted some significant pages.<sup>242</sup> Even though it is not possible to speak of atheism in a univocal way or to limit it exclusively to the philosophy of materialism, since there exist numerous forms of atheism and the word is perhaps often used in a wrong sense, nevertheless it is certain that *a true and proper materialism*, understood as a theory which explains reality and accepted as the key-principle of personal and social action, *is characteristically atheistic*. The order of values and the aims of action which it describes are strictly bound to a reading of the whole of reality as "matter". Though it sometimes also speaks of the "spirit" and of "questions of the spirit", as for example in the fields of culture or morality, it does so only insofar as it considers certain facts as derived from matter (*epiphenomena*), since according to this system matter is the one and only form of being. It follows, according to this interpretation, that religion can only be understood as a kind of "idealistic illusion", to be fought with the most suitable means and methods according to circumstances of time and place, in order to eliminate it from society and from man's very heart.

It can be said therefore that materialism is the systematic and logical development of that "resistance" and opposition condemned by Saint Paul with the words: "The desires of the *flesh* are against the Spirit". But, as Saint Paul emphasizes in the second part of his aphorism, this antagonism is mutual: "the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh". Those who wish to live by the Spirit, accepting and corresponding to his salvific activity, cannot but reject the internal and external tendencies and claims of the "flesh", also in its ideological and historical expression as anti-religious "materialism". Against this background so characteristic of our time, in preparing for the great Jubilee we must emphasize the "desires of the spirit", as exhortations echoing in the night of a new time of advent, at the end of which, like two thousand years ago, "every man will see the salvation of God".<sup>243</sup> This is a possibility and a hope that the Church entrusts to the men and women of today. She knows that the meeting or collision between the "desires

<sup>242</sup> Cf. Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World *Gaudium et Spes*, 19, 20, 21.

<sup>243</sup> Lk. 3:6; cf. Is. 40:5.



against the spirit" *which mark so many aspects of contemporary civilization*, especially in some of its spheres, and "the desires against the flesh", with God's approach to us, his Incarnation, his constantly renewed communication of the Holy Spirit — this meeting or collision may in many cases be of a tragic nature and may perhaps lead to fresh defeats for humanity. But the Church firmly believes that on God's part there is always a salvific self-giving, a salvific coming and, in some way or other, a salvific "convincing concerning sin" by the power of the Spirit.

57. The Pauline contrast between the "Spirit" and the "flesh" also includes the contrast between "life" and "death". This is a serious problem, and concerning it one must say at once that materialism, as a system of thought, in all its forms, means the *acceptance of death* as the definitive *end of human existence*. Everything that is material is corruptible, and therefore the human body (insofar as it is "animal") is mortal. If man in his essence is only "flesh", death remains for him an impassable frontier and limit. Hence one can understand how it can be said that human life is nothing but an "existence in order to die".

It must be added that on the horizon of contemporary civilization — especially in the form that is most developed in the technical and scientific sense — *the signs and symptoms of death* have become particularly present and frequent. One has only to think of the arms race and of its inherent danger of nuclear self-destruction. Moreover, everyone has become more and more aware of the grave situation of vast areas of our planet, marked by death-dealing poverty and famine. It is a question of problems that are not only economic but also and above all ethical. But on the horizon of our era there are gathering ever darker "signs of death" a custom has become widely established — in some places it threatens to become almost an institution — of taking the lives of human beings even before they are born, or before they reach the natural point of death. Furthermore, despite many noble efforts for peace, new wars which destroy the lives or the health of hundreds of thousands of people. And how can one fail to mention the attacks against human life by terrorism, organized even on an international scale?

Unfortunately, this is only a partial and incomplete sketch of the *picture of death* being composed in *our age*, as we come ever closer to the end of the second Millennium of the Christian era. Does there not rise up a new and more or less consci-



ous plea to the life-giving Spirit from the dark shades of materialistic civilization, and especially from those increasing *signs of death* in the sociological and historical picture in which that civilization has been constructed? At any rate, even independently of the measure of human hopes or despairs, and of the illusions or deceptions deriving from the development of materialistic systems of thought and life, *there remains the Christian certainty* that the Spirit blows where he wills and that we possess "the first fruits of the Spirit", and that therefore even though we may be subjected to the sufferings of time that passes away, "*we groan inwardly as we wait for . . . the redemption of our bodies*",<sup>244</sup> or of all our human essence, which is bodily and spiritual. Yes, we groan, but in an expectation filled with unflagging hope, because it is precisely this human being that God has drawn near to, God who is Spirit. God the Father, "sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh".<sup>245</sup> At the culmination of the Paschal Mystery, the Son of God, made man and crucified for the sins of the world, appeared in the midst of his Apostles after the Resurrection, breathed on them and said "Receive the Holy Spirit". *This "breath" continues for ever, for "the Spirit helps us in our weakness"*.<sup>246</sup>

#### 4. The Holy Spirit strengthens the "inner man"

58. The mystery of the Resurrection and of Pentecost is proclaimed and lived by the Church, which has inherited and which carries on the witness of the Apostles about the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. She is the perennial witness to this victory over death which revealed the power of the Holy Spirit and determined his new coming, his new presence in people and in the world. For in Christ's Resurrection the Holy Spirit-Paraclete revealed himself especially as he who gives life: "He who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through his Spirit which dwells in you".<sup>247</sup> *In the name of the Resurrection of Christ the Church proclaims life, which*

<sup>244</sup> Cf. Rom. 8:23.

<sup>245</sup> Rom. 8:3.

<sup>246</sup> Rom. 8:26.

<sup>247</sup> Rom. 8:11.

manifested itself beyond the limits of death, the life which is stronger than death. At the same time, she proclaims *him who gives this life*: the Spirit, *the Giver of Life*; she proclaims him and cooperates with him in giving life. For "although your bodies are dead because of sin, your spirits are alive because of righteousness",<sup>248</sup> the righteousness accomplished by the Crucified and Risen Christ. And in the name of Christ's Resurrection the Church serves the life that comes from God himself, in close union with and humble service to the Spirit.

Precisely through this service man becomes in an ever new manner the "way of the Church", as I said in the Encyclical on Christ the Redeemer<sup>249</sup> and as I now repeat in this present one on the Holy Spirit. United with the Spirit, the Church is supremely aware of the reality of the *inner man*, of what is deepest and most essential in man, *because it is spirited and incorruptible*. At this level the Spirit grafts the "root of immortality",<sup>250</sup> from which the new life springs. This is man's life in God, which, as a fruit of God's salvific self-communication in the Holy Spirit, can develop and flourish only by the Spirit's action. Therefore Saint Paul speaks to God on behalf of believers, to whom he declares "I bow my knees before the Father..., that he may grant you... *to be strengthened with might through his Spirit in the inner man*".<sup>251</sup>

Under the influence of the Holy Spirit this inner, "spiritual", man matures and grows strong. Thanks to the divine self-communication, the human spirit which "knows the secrets of man" meets the "Spirit who searches everything, even the depths of God".<sup>252</sup> *In this Spirit*, who is the eternal gift, the *Triune God opens himself to man*, to the human spirit. The hidden breath of the divine Spirit enables the human spirit to open in its turn before the saving and sanctifying self-opening of God. Through the gift of grace, which comes from the Holy Spirit, man enters a "*new life*", is brought into the supernatural reality of the divine life itself and becomes a "*dwelling-place of the Holy Spirit*", a living temple of God.<sup>253</sup> For through the Holy Spirit, the Father and the Son come to him and take

<sup>248</sup> Rom. 8:10.

<sup>249</sup> Cf. Encyclical *Redemptor Hominis* (4 March 1979), 14: AAS 71 (1979), pp. 284f.

<sup>250</sup> Cf. Wis. 15:3.

<sup>251</sup> Cf. Eph. 3:14-16.

<sup>252</sup> Cf. 1 Cor. 2:10 f.

<sup>253</sup> Cf. Rom. 8:9; 1 Cor. 6:19.

up their abode with him.<sup>254</sup> In the communion of grace with the Trinity, man's "living area" is broadened and raised up to the supernatural level of divine life. *Man lives in God and by God: he lives "according to the Spirit", and "sets his mind on the things of the Spirit"*.

59. Man's intimate relationship with God in the Holy Spirit also enables him to understand himself, his own humanity, in a new way. Thus that image and likeness of God which man is from his very beginning is fully realized.<sup>256</sup> This intimate truth of the human being has to be continually rediscovered in the light of Christ, who is the prototype of the relationship with God. There also has to be rediscovered in Christ the reason for "full self-discovery through a sincere gift of himself" to others, as the Second Vatican Council writes: precisely by reason of this divine likeness which "shows that on earth man... is the only creature that God wishes for himself" in his dignity as a person, but as one open to integration and social communion.<sup>256</sup> The effective knowledge and full implementation of this truth of his being come about *only by the power of the Holy Spirit*. Man learns this truth from Jesus Christ and puts it into practice in his own life by the power of the Spirit, whom Jesus himself has given to us.

Along this path — the path of such an inner maturity, which includes the full discovery of the meaning of humanity — God comes close to man, and permeates more and more completely the whole human world. *The Triune God, who "exists" in himself as a transcendent reality of interpersonal gift, giving himself in the Holy Spirit as gift to man, transforms the human world from within, from inside hearts and minds. Along this path the world, made to share in the divine gift, becomes — as the Council teaches — "ever more human, ever more profoundly*

<sup>254</sup> Cf. *Jn.* 14:23; ST. IRENAEUS, *Adversus Haereses*, V, 6, 1: SC 153, pp. 72-80; ST. HILARY, *De Trinitate*, VIII, 19, 21; PL 10, 250, 252; ST. AMBROSE, *De Spiritu Sancto*, I, 6, 8: PL 16, 752 f.; ST. AUGUSTINE, *Enarr.* in Ps. XLIX, 2: CCL 38, pp. 575f.; ST. CYRIL of ALEXANDRIA, *In Ioannis Evangelium*, Bk. I; II: PG 73, 154-158; 246; Bk. IX: PG 74, 262; ST. ATHANASIUS, *Oratio III contra Arianos*, 24: PG. 26, 374 f.; *Epist. I ad Serapionem*, 24 PG. 26, 586f.; DIDYMUS THE BLIND, *De Trinitate*, II, 6-7: PG. 39, 523-530; ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM, *In Epist. ad Romanos Homilia XIII*, 8: PG. 60, 519; ST. THOMAS AQUINAS, *Summa Theol.* Ia, q. 43, aa. 1, 3-6.

<sup>255</sup> Cf. *Gen.* 1:26 f.; ST. THOMAS AQUINAS, *Summa Theol.* Ia. q. 93, aa. 4, 5, 8.

<sup>256</sup> Cf. Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World *Gaudium et Spes*, 24; cf. also No. 25.

human",<sup>257</sup> while within the world, through people's hearts and minds, the Kingdom develops in which God will be definitively "all in all":<sup>258</sup> as gift and love. Gift and love: this is the eternal power of the opening of the Triune God to man and the world, in the Holy Spirit.

As the year 2000 since the birth of Christ draws near, it is a question of ensuring that an ever greater number of people "may fully find themselves... through a sincere gift of self", according to the expression of the Council already quoted. Through the action of the Spirit-Paraclete, may there be accomplished in our world a process of true growth in humanity, in both individual and community life. In this regard Jesus himself "when he prayed to the Father, 'that all may be one... as we are one' (Jn. 17:21-22) ... implied a certain likeness between the union of the divine persons and the union of the children of God in truth and charity".<sup>259</sup> The Council repeats this truth about man, and the Church sees in it a particularly strong and conclusive indication of her own apostolic tasks. For if man is the way of the Church, this way passes through the whole mystery of Christ, as man's divine model. Along this way the Holy Spirit, strengthening in each of us "the inner man", enables man ever more "fully to find himself through a sincere gift of self". These words of the Pastoral Constitution of the Council can be said to sum up *the whole of Christian anthropology*: that theory and practice, based on the Gospel, in which man discovers himself as belonging to Christ and discovers that in Christ he is raised to the status of a child of God, and so understands better his own dignity as man, precisely because he is the subject of God's approach and presence, the subject of the divine condescension, which contains the prospect and the very root of definitive glorification. Thus it can truly be said that "the glory of God is the living man, yet man's life is the vision of God":<sup>260</sup> man, living a divine life, is the glory of God, and the Holy Spirit is the hidden dispenser of this life and this glory. The Holy Spirit — says the great Basil — "while simple in essence and manifold in his virtues...

<sup>257</sup> Cf. *Ibid.* 38, 40.

<sup>258</sup> Cf. I Cor. 15:28.

<sup>259</sup> Cf. Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World *Gaudium et Spes*, 24.

<sup>260</sup> Cf. ST. IRENAEUS, *Adversus Haereses*, IV, 20, 7: SC 100/2, p. 648.

extends himself without undergoing any diminishing, is present in each subject capable of receiving him as if he were the only one, and gives grace which is sufficient for all".<sup>261</sup>

60. When, under the influence of the Paraclete, people discover this divine dimension of their being and life, both as individuals and as a community, they are able to *free themselves from the various determinisms* which derive mainly from the materialistic bases of thought, practice and related modes of action. In our age these factors have succeeded in penetrating into man's inmost being, into that sanctuary of the conscience where the Holy Spirit continuously radiates the light and strength of new life in the "freedom of the children of God". Man's growth in this life is hindered by the conditionings and pressures exerted upon him by dominating structures and mechanisms in the various spheres of society. It can be said that in many cases social factors, instead of fostering the development and expansion of the human spirit, ultimately deprive the human spirit of the genuine truth of its being and life — over which the Holy Spirit keeps vigil — in order to subject it to the "prince of this world".

The great Jubilee of the year 2000 thus contains a message of liberation by the power of the Spirit, who alone can help individuals and communities to free themselves from the old and new determinisms, by guiding them with the "law of the Spirit, which gives life in Christ Jesus",<sup>262</sup> and thereby discovering and accomplishing the full measure of man's true freedom. For, as Saint Paul writes, "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom".<sup>263</sup> This revelation of freedom and hence of man's true dignity acquires a particular eloquence for Christians and for the Church in a state of persecution — both in ancient times and in the present — because the witnesses to divine Truth then become a living proof of the action of the Spirit of truth present in the hearts and minds of the faithful, and they often mark with their own death by martyrdom the supreme glorification of human dignity.

Also in the ordinary conditions of society, Christians, as *witnesses to man's authentic dignity*, by their obedience to the Holy Spirit contribute to the manifold "renewal of the face of the earth", working together with their brothers and sisters in order to achieve and put to good use everything that is good, noble and beautiful in the modern progress of civilization, culture, science, technology and the other areas of thought and

<sup>261</sup> ST. BASIL, *De Spiritu Sancto*, IX, 22: PG 32, 110.

<sup>262</sup> Rom. 8:2.

<sup>263</sup> 2 Cor. 3:17.



human activity.<sup>264</sup> They do this as disciples of Christ who — as the Council writes — “appointed Lord by his Resurrection, . . . is now at work in the hearts of men *through the power of his Spirit*. He arouses not only a desire for the age to come but by that very fact, he animates, purifies and strengthens those noble longings too by which the human family strives to make its life more humane and to render the earth submissive to this goal”.<sup>265</sup> Thus they affirm still more strongly the greatness of man, made in the image and likeness of God, a greatness shown by the mystery of the Incarnation of the Son of God, who “in the fullness of time”, by the power of the Holy Spirit, entered into history and manifested himself as true man, he who was begotten before every creature, “through whom are all things and through whom we exist”.<sup>266</sup>

## 5. The Church as the sacrament of intimate union with God

61. As the end of the second Millennium approaches, an event which should recall to everyone and as it were make present anew the coming of the Word in the fullness of time, the Church once more *means to ponder the very essence* of her *divine-human* constitution and of that *mission* which enables her to share in the Messianic mission of Christ, according to the teaching and the ever valid plan of the Second Vatican Council. Following this line, we can go back to the Upper Room, where Jesus Christ reveals the Holy Spirit as the Paraclete, the Spirit of truth, and where he speaks of his own “departure” through the Cross as the necessary condition for the Spirit’s “coming”: “It is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Counsellor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you”.<sup>267</sup> We have seen that this prediction first came true the evening of Easter day and then during the celebration of Pentecost in Jerusalem, and we have seen that ever since then it is being fulfilled in human history through the Church.

In the light of that prediction, we also grasp the full meaning of *what Jesus* says, also at the Last Supper, about *his new “coming”*. For it is significant that in the same farewell discourse Jesus foretells not only his “departure” but also his new “coming”. His exact words are: “I will not leave you desolate;

<sup>264</sup> Cf. SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL, Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World *Gaudium et Spes*, 53-59.

<sup>265</sup> *Ibid.*, 38.

<sup>266</sup> 1 Cor. 8:6.

<sup>267</sup> Jn. 16:7.

*I will come to you*".<sup>268</sup> And at the moment of his final farewell before he ascends into heaven, he will repeat even more explicitly: "Lo, *I am with you*", and this "always, to the close of the age".<sup>269</sup> This new "coming" of Christ, this continuous coming of his, in order to be with his Apostles, with the Church, this "I am with you always, to the close of the age", does not of course change the fact of his "departure". It follows that departure, after the close of Christ's messianic activity on earth, and it occurs *in the context of the predicted sending of the Holy Spirit* and in a certain sense forms part of *his own mission*. And yet it occurs *by the power of the Holy Spirit*, who makes it possible for Christ, who has gone away, to come now and for ever in a new way. This new coming of Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit, and his constant presence and action in the spiritual life, are accomplished *in the sacramental reality*. In this reality, Christ, who has gone away in his visible humanity, comes, is present and acts in the Church in such an intimate way as to make it his own Body. As such, the Church lives, works and grows "to the close of the age". All this happens through the power of the Holy Spirit.

62. The most complete sacramental expression of the "departure" of Christ through the mystery of the Cross and Resurrection is the *Eucharist*. In every celebration of the Eucharist his coming, his salvific presence, is sacramentally realized: in the Sacrifice and in Communion. It is accomplished by the power of the Holy Spirit, as part of his own mission.<sup>270</sup> Through the Eucharist *the Holy Spirit accomplishes* that "*strengthening of the inner man*" spoken of in the *Letter to the Ephesians*.<sup>271</sup> Through the Eucharist, individuals and communities, by the action of the Paraclete-Counsellor, learn to discover the divine sense of human life, as spoken of by the Council: that sense whereby Jesus Christ "fully reveals man to man himself", suggesting "a certain likeness *between the union of the divine persons*, and the union of God's children in truth and charity".<sup>272</sup> This union is expressed and made real especially through the Eucharist, in which man shares in the sacrifice of Christ which this celebration actualizes, and he also learns to "find himself . . .

<sup>268</sup> *Jn.* 14. 18.

<sup>269</sup> *Mt.* 28:20.

<sup>270</sup> This is what the "Epiclesis" before the Consecration expresses: "Let your Spirit come upon these gifts to make them holy, so that they may become for us the body and blood of our Lord, Jesus Christ" (*Eucharistic Prayer II*).

<sup>271</sup> Cf. *Eph.* 3:16.

<sup>272</sup> Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World *Gaudium et Spes*, 24.

through a . . . gift of himself",<sup>273</sup> through communion with God and with others, his brothers and sisters.

For this reason the early Christians, right from the days immediately following the coming down of the Holy Spirit, "devoted themselves to the breaking of bread and the prayers", and in this way they formed a community united by the teaching of the Apostles.<sup>274</sup> Thus "they recognized" that their Risen Lord, who had ascended into heaven, came *into* their midst *anew* in that Eucharist community of the Church and by means of it. Guided by the Holy Spirit, the Church from the beginning *expressed* and *confirmed* her identity through the Eucharist. And so it has always been, in every Christian generation, down to our own time, down to this present period when we await the end of the second Christian Millennium. Of course, we unfortunately have to acknowledge the fact that the Millennium which is about to end is the one in which there have occurred the great separations between Christians. All believers in Christ, therefore, following the example of the Apostles, must fervently strive to conform their thinking and action to the will of the Holy Spirit, "the principle of the Church's unity",<sup>275</sup> so that all who have been baptized in the one Spirit in order to make up one body may be brethren joined in the celebration of the same Eucharist, "a sacrament of love, a sign of unity, a bond of charity!"<sup>276</sup>

63. Christ's Eucharistic presence, his sacramental "I am with you", enables the Church to *discover* ever more deeply *her own mystery*, as is shown by the whole ecclesiology of the Second Vatican Council, whereby "the Church is in Christ as a sacrament or sign and instrument of the intimate union with God and of the unity of the whole human race".<sup>277</sup> *As a sacrament*, the Church is a development from the Paschal Mystery of Christ's "departure", living by his ever new "coming" by the power of the Holy Spirit, within the same mission of the Paraclete-Spirit of truth. Precisely this is the essential mystery of the Church, as the Council professes.

<sup>273</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>274</sup> Cf. Acts 2:42.

<sup>275</sup> SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL, Decree on Ecumenism *Unitatis Redintegratio*, 2.

<sup>276</sup> ST. AUGUSTINE, *In Ioannis Evangelium Tractatus XXVI*, 13: CCL 36, p. 266; cf. SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL, Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 47.

<sup>277</sup> Dogmatic Constitution on the Church *Lumen Gentium*, 1.

While it is through creation that God is he in whom we all "live and move and have our being",<sup>278</sup> in its turn *the power of the Redemption* endures and develops in the history of man and the world in a double "rhythm" as it were, the source of which is found in the Eternal Father. On the one hand there is the *rhythm of the mission of the Son*, who came into the world and was born of the Virgin Mary by the power of the Holy Spirit; and on the other hand there is also the *rhythm of the Holy Spirit*, as he was revealed definitely by Christ. Through the "departure" of the Son, the Holy Spirit came and continues to come as Counsellor and Spirit of truth. And in the context of his mission, as it were within the indivisible presence of the Holy Spirit, the Son, who "had gone away" in the Paschal Mystery, "comes" and is continuously *present in the mystery of the Church*, at times concealing himself and at times revealing himself in her history, and always directing her steps. All of this happens in a sacramental way, through the power of the Holy Spirit, who, "drawing from the wealth of Christ's Redemption", constantly gives life. As the Church becomes ever more aware of this mystery, she sees herself more clearly, above all as a sacrament.

This also happens because, by the will of her Lord, *through the individual sacraments the Church fulfils her salvific ministry* to man. This sacramental ministry, every time it is accomplished, brings with it the mystery of the "departure" of Christ through the Cross and the Resurrection, by virtue of which the Holy Spirit comes. He comes and works: "he gives life". For the sacraments signify grace and confer grace: *they signify life and give life*. The Church is the *visible dispenser* of the sacred signs, while the Holy Spirit acts in them as the *invisible dispenser* of the life which they signify. Together with the Spirit Christ Jesus is present and acting.

64. If the Church is the sacrament of intimate union with God, she is such in Jesus Christ, in whom this same union is accomplished as a *salvific reality*. She is such in Jesus Christ, through the power of the Holy Spirit. The fullness of the salvific reality, which is Christ in history, *extends* in a sacramental way *in the power of the Spirit-Paraclete*. In this way the Holy Spirit is "another Counsellor", or new Counsellor, because through his action the Good News takes shape in human minds and hearts and extends through history. In all of this it is the Holy Spirit who gives life.

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<sup>278</sup> Acts 17:28.



When we use the word "sacrament" in reference to the Church, we must bear in mind that in the texts of the Council *the sacramentality of the Church* appears as distinct from the sacramentality that is proper, in the strict sense, to the Sacraments. Thus we read: "The Church is . . . *in the nature of a sacrament* — a sign and instrument of communion with God". But what matters and what emerges from the analogical sense in which the word is used in the two cases is the relationship which the Church has with the power of the Holy Spirit, who alone gives life: the Church is the sign and instrument of the presence and action of the life-giving Spirit.

Vatican II adds that the Church is "*a sacrament . . . of the unity of all mankind*". Obviously it is a question of the unity which the human race — which in itself is differentiated in various ways — *has from God and in God*. This unity has its roots in the mystery of creation and acquires a new dimension in the mystery of the Redemption, which is ordered to universal salvation. Since God "wishes all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth",<sup>279</sup> the Redemption includes all humanity and in a certain way all of creation. *In the same universal dimension of Redemption the Holy Spirit is acting*, by virtue of the "departure of Christ". Therefore the Church, rooted through her own mystery in the Trinitarian plan of salvation, with good reason regards herself as the "sacrament of the unity of the whole human race". She knows that she is such through the power of the Holy Spirit, of which power she is a sign and instrument in the fulfilment of God's salvific plan.

In this way the "*condescension*" of the infinite Trinitarian Love is brought about: God, who is infinite spirit, comes close to the visible world. The Triune God communicates himself to man in the Holy Spirit from the beginning through his "image and likeness". Under the action of the same Spirit, *man*, and through him *the created world*, which has been redeemed by Christ, *draw near to their ultimate destinies in God*. The Church is "a sacrament, that is sign and instrument" of this coming together of the two poles of creation and redemption, God and man. She strives to restore and strengthen the unity at the very roots of the human race: in the relationship of communion that man has with God as his Creator, Lord and Redeemer. This is a truth which on the basis of the Council's teaching we can meditate on, explain and apply in all the fullness of its meaning in this phase of transition from the second to the third

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<sup>279</sup> 1 Tim. 2:4.



Christian Millennium. And we rejoice to realize ever more clearly that within the work carried out by the Church in the history of salvation, which is part of the history of humanity, the Holy Spirit is present and at work — he who with the breath of divine life permeates man's earthly pilgrimage and causes all creation, all history, to flow together to its ultimate end, in the infinite ocean of God.

## 6. The Spirit and the Bride: "Come!"

65. *The breath of the divine life*, the Holy Spirit, in its simplest and most common manner, expresses itself and *makes itself felt in prayer*. It is a beautiful and salutary thought that, wherever people are praying in the world, there the Holy Spirit is, the living breath of prayer. It is a beautiful and salutary thought to recognize that, if prayer is offered throughout the world, in the past, in the present and in the future, equally widespread is the presence and action of the Holy Spirit, who "breathes" prayer in the heart of man in all the endless range of the most varied situations and conditions, sometimes favourable and sometimes unfavourable to the spiritual and religious life. Many times, through the influence of the Spirit, prayer rises from the human heart in spite of prohibitions and persecutions and even official proclamations regarding the non-religious or even atheistic character of public life. Prayer always remains the voice of all those who apparently have no voice — and in this voice there always echoes that "*loud cry*" attributed to Christ by the *Letter to the Hebrews*.<sup>280</sup> Prayer is also the *revelation* of that *abyss* which is the heart of man: a depth which comes *from God* and *which only God can fill*, precisely *with the Holy Spirit*. We read in Luke: "If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!"<sup>281</sup>

The Holy Spirit is the gift that comes into man's heart together *with prayer*. In prayer he manifests himself first of all and above all as the gift that "helps us in our weakness". This is the magnificent thought developed by Saint Paul in the *Letter to the Romans*, when he writes: "For we do not know how to pray as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with sighs too deep for words".<sup>282</sup> Therefore, the Holy Spirit

<sup>280</sup> Cf. *Heb.* 5:7.

<sup>281</sup> *Lk.* 11:13.

<sup>282</sup> *Rom.* 8:26.

not only enables us to pray, but guides us "from within" in prayer: he is present in our prayer and gives it a divine dimension.<sup>283</sup> Thus, "*he who searches the hearts of men knows what is the mind of the Spirit*, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God".<sup>284</sup> Prayer through the power of the Holy Spirit becomes the ever more mature expression of the new man, who by means of this prayer participates in the divine life.

*Our difficult age has a special need of prayer.* In the course of history — both in the past and in the present — many men and women have borne witness to the importance of prayer by consecrating themselves to the praise of God and to the life of prayer, especially in monasteries and convents; so too recent years have been seeing a growth in the number of people who, in ever more widespread movements and groups, are giving first place to prayer and seeking in prayer a renewal of their spiritual life. This is a significant and comforting sign, for from this experience there is coming a real contribution to the revival of prayer among the faithful, who have been helped to gain a clearer idea of the Holy Spirit as he who inspires in hearts a profound yearning for holiness.

In many individuals and many communities there is a growing awareness that, even with all the rapid progress of technological and scientific civilization, and despite the real conquests and goals attained, *man is threatened, humanity is threatened.* In the face of this danger, and indeed already experiencing the frightful reality of man's spiritual decadence, individuals and whole communities, guided as it were by an inner sense of faith, are seeking the strength to raise man up again, to save him from himself, from his own errors and mistakes that often make harmful his very conquests. And thus they are discovering prayer, in which the "Spirit who helps us in our weakness" manifests himself. In this way the times in which we are living are bringing the Holy Spirit closer to the many who are returning to prayer. And I trust that all will find in the teaching of this Encyclical nourishment for their interior life, and that they will succeed in strengthening, under the action of the Spirit, their commitment to prayer in harmony with the Church and her Magisterium.

66. In the midst of the problems, disappointments and hopes, desertions and returns of these times of ours, *the Church re-*

<sup>283</sup> Cf. ORIGEN, *De Oratione*, 2: PG. 11, 419-423.

<sup>284</sup> *Rom.* 8:27.

mains faithful to the mystery of her birth. While it is an historical fact that the Church came forth from the Upper Room on the day of Pentecost, in a certain sense one can say that she has never left it. Spiritually the event of Pentecost does not belong only to the past: the Church is always in the Upper Room that she bears in her heart. The Church perseveres in prayer, like the Apostles together with Mary, the Mother of Christ, and with those who in Jerusalem were the first seed of the Christian community and who awaited in prayer the coming of the Holy Spirit.

The Church perseveres in prayer with Mary. This union of the praying Church with the Mother of Christ has been part of the mystery of the Church from the beginning: we see her present in this mystery as she is present in the mystery of her Son. It is the Council that says to us "*The Blessed Virgin...*, overshadowed by the Holy Spirit, ... brought forth... the Son..., he whom God placed as the first-born among many brethren (cf. *Rom.* 8:29), namely the faithful. In their birth and development she cooperates with a maternal love"; she is through "his singular graces and offices... intimately united with the Church... (she) is a model of the Church".<sup>285</sup> "The Church, moreover, contemplating Mary's mysterious sanctity, imitating her charity,... becomes herself a mother" and "herself is a virgin, who keeps... the fidelity she has pledged to her Spouse. Imitating the Mother of the Lord, and by the power of the Holy Spirit, she preserves with virginal purity an integral faith, a firm hope, and a sincere charity".<sup>286</sup>

Thus one can understand the profound reason why the Church, united with the Virgin Mother, prays unceasingly as the Bride to her divine Spouse, as the words of the Book of Revelation, quoted by the Council, attest: "*The Spirit and the bride say to the Lord Jesus Christ: Come!*"<sup>287</sup> The Church's prayer is this unceasing invocation, in which "the Spirit himself intercedes for us": in a certain sense, the Spirit himself utters it with the Church and in the Church. For the Spirit is given to the Church in order that through his power the whole community of the People of God, however widely scattered and diverse, may persevere in hope: that hope in which "we have been saved".<sup>288</sup> It is the eschatological hope, the hope of definitive fulfilment in God, the hope of the eternal Kingdom,

<sup>285</sup> Dogmatic Constitution on the Church *Lumen Gentium*, 63.

<sup>286</sup> *Ibid.*, 64.

<sup>287</sup> *Ibid.*, 4: cf. *Rev.* 22:17.

<sup>288</sup> Cf. *Rom.* 8:24.

that is brought about by participation in the life of the Trinity. The Holy Spirit, given to the Apostles as the Counsellor, *is the guardian and animator of this hope in the heart of the Church.*

In the time leading up to the third Millennium after Christ while "the Spirit and the bride say to the Lord Jesus: Come!", this prayer of theirs is filled, as always, with an eschatological significance, which is also destined to give fulness of meaning to the celebration of the great Jubilee. It is a prayer concerned with the salvific destinies towards which the Holy Spirit by his action opens hearts throughout the history of man on earth. But at the same time *this prayer is directed towards a precise moment of history* which highlights the "fulness of time" marked by the year 2000. The Church wishes to *prepare* for this Jubilee *in the Holy Spirit*, just as the Virgin of Nazareth in whom the Word was made flesh was prepared by the Holy Spirit.

## CONCLUSION

67. We wish to bring to a close these consideration in the heart of the Church and in the heart of man. The way of the Church passes through the heart of man, because here is the hidden *place of the salvific encounter with the Holy Spirit*, with the hidden God, and precisely here the Holy Spirit becomes "a spring of water welling up to eternal life".<sup>289</sup> He comes here as the Spirit of truth and as the Paraclete, as he was promised by Christ. From here he acts as *Counsellor, Intercessor, Advocate*, especially when man, when humanity find themselves before the judgment of condemnation by that "accuser" about whom the *Book of Revelation* says that "he accuses them day and night before our God".<sup>290</sup> The Holy Spirit does not cease to be *the guardian of hope* in the human heart: the hope of all human creatures, and especially of those who "have the first fruits of the Spirit" and "wait for the redemption of their bodies".<sup>291</sup>

The Holy Spirit, in his mysterious bond of divine communion with the Redeemer of man, is the one who brings about the continuity of his work: he takes from Christ and transmits to all, unceasingly entering into the history of the world through the heart of man. Here he becomes — as the litur-

<sup>289</sup> Cf. *Jn.* 4:14; Dogmatic Constitution on the Church *Lumen Gentium*,

<sup>290</sup> Cf. *Rev.* 12:10.

<sup>291</sup> Cf. *Rom.* 8:23.

gical Sequence of the Solemnity of Pentecost proclaims — the true “*father of the poor, giver of gifts, light of hearts*”; he becomes the “*sweet guest of the soul*”, whom the Church unceasingly greets on the threshold of the inmost sanctuary of every human being. For he brings “rest and relief” in the midst of toil, in the midst of the work of human hands and minds; he brings “rest” and “ease” in the midst of the heat of the day, in the midst of the anxieties, struggles and perils of every age; he brings “consolation”, when the human heart grieves and is tempted to despair.

And therefore the same Sequence exclaims: “Without your aid *nothing is in man*, nothing is without fault”. For only the Holy Spirit “convinces concerning sin”, concerning evil, in order to restore what is good in man and in the world: in order to “renew the face of the earth”. Therefore, he purifies from everything that “disfigures” man, from “what is unclean”; he heals even the deepest wounds of human existence; he changes the interior dryness of souls, transforming them into fertile fields of grace and holiness. What is “hard he softens”, what is “frozen he warms”, what is “wayward he sets anew” on the paths of salvation.<sup>292</sup>

Praying thus, the Church unceasingly professes her faith that *there exists in our created world a Spirit who is an uncreated gift*. He is the Spirit of the Father and of the Son: like the Father and the Son he is uncreated, without limit, eternal, omnipotent, God, Lord.<sup>293</sup> This Spirit of God “fills the universe”, and all that is created recognizes in him the source of its own identity, finds in him its own transcendent expression, turns to him and awaits him, invokes him with its own being. Man turns to him, as to the Paraclete, the Spirit of truth and of love, *man who lives by truth and by love*, and who without the source of truth and of love cannot live. To him turns the Church, which is the heart of humanity, to implore for all and dispense to all those gifts of the love which through him “has been poured into our hearts”.<sup>294</sup> To him turns the Church, along the intricate paths of man’s pilgrimage on earth: she implores, she unceasingly implores *uprightness of human acts*, as the Spirit’s work; she implores *the joy and consolation* that only he, the true Counsellor, can bring by coming down into people’s

<sup>292</sup> Cf. Sequence *Veni, Sancte Spiritus*.

<sup>293</sup> Cf. Creed *Quicumque*: DS 75.

<sup>294</sup> Cf. Rom. 5:5.



inmost hearts;<sup>295</sup> the Church implores the *grace of the virtues* that merit heavenly glory, implores *eternal salvation*, in the full communication of the divine life, to which the Father has eternally "predestined" human beings, created through love in the image and likeness of the Most Holy Trinity.

The Church with her heart which embraces all human hearts implores from the Holy Spirit that happiness which only in God has its complete realization: the joy "*that no one will be able to take away*";<sup>296</sup> the joy which is *the fruit of love*, and therefore of God who is love; she implores "the righteousness, the peace and the joy of the Holy Spirit" in which, in the words of Saint Paul, consists the Kingdom of God.<sup>297</sup>

*Peace too is the fruit of love*: that interior peace, which weary man seeks in his inmost being; that peace besought by humanity, the human family, peoples, nations, continents, anxiously hoping to obtain it in the prospect of the transition from the second to the third Christian Millennium. Since *the way of peace passes in the last analysis through love* and seeks to create the civilization of love, the Church fixes her eyes on him who is the love of the Father and the Son, and in spite of increasing dangers she does not cease to trust, she does not cease *to invoke and to serve the peace of man on earth*. Her trust is based on him who, being the Spirit-love, is also the *Spirit of peace* and does not cease to be present in our human world, on the horizon of minds and hearts, in order to "fill the universe" with love and peace.

Before him I kneel at the end of these considerations, and implore him, as the Spirit of the Father and the Son, to grant all of us *the blessing and grace* which I desire to pass on, in the name of the Most Holy Trinity, to the sons and daughters of the Church and to the whole human family.

Given in Rome, at Saint Peter's, on 18 May, the Solemnity of Pentecost, in the year 1986, the eighth of my Pontificate.

JOANNES PAULUS PP. II

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<sup>295</sup> One should mention here the important Apostolic Exhortation *Gaudete in Domino*, published by Pope Paul VI on 9 May in the Holy Year 1975; ever relevant is the invitation expressed there "to implore the gift of joy from the Holy Spirit" and likewise "to appreciate the properly spiritual joy, that is a fruit of the Holy Spirit": AAS 67 (1975), pp. 289; 302.

<sup>296</sup> Cf. *Jn.* 16:22.

<sup>297</sup> Cf. *Rom.* 14:17; *Gal.* 5:22.

## 1. STIPEND FOR BINATED AND TRINATED MASSES

*I am a member of a religious institute. On Sundays and sometimes on week-days I have to say two or three Masses. The local Ordinary, who has allowed me to binate or trinate, requires from all parish priests to remit to the diocesan Curia the stipend for binated and trinated Masses. Likewise, my religious Superior with his council requires the same stipend for the Community. May I know to whom I have to give the stipend?*

*A Parish Priest*

The case at hand is easy to solve, if we follow the norms established by the new Code. The following two canons are the basis of our solution.

Canon 905 reads: "Apart from those cases in which the law allows him to celebrate or concelebrate the Eucharist a number of times on the same day, a priest may not celebrate more than once a day. If there is a scarcity of priests, the local Ordinary may, for a good reason, allow priests to celebrate twice on one day or even, if pastoral need requires it, three times on Sundays or holy days of obligation."

Canon 951 reads: "A priest who celebrates a number of Masses on the same day may apply each Mass for the intention for which an offering was made, subject however to the rule that, apart from Christmas Day, he may retain for himself the offering for only one Mass; the others he is to transmit to purposes prescribed by the Ordinary, while allowing for some compensation on the ground of an extrinsic title."

The simple reading of the foregoing two canons shows us two different things, namely:

a) the faculty to say more than one Mass on the same day is given by the *local* Ordinary;

b) the stipends for the binated and trinated Masses are to be transmitted to purposes prescribed by the Ordinary, not precisely *local*.

In other words, a priest, may only binate or trinate, by virtue of the faculty given to him by the *local* Ordinary. The stipends however for binated and trinated Masses are to be transmitted to purposes that the Ordinary of the binating or trinating priest has prescribed. This latter Ordinary can be the Major Superior of religious clerical institutes of pontifical right and of clerical societies of apostolic life of pontifical right, if the binating and trinating priest belongs to one of these institutes or societies, or the *local* Ordinary if the binating or trinating priest is other than the above mentioned priests (confer canon 134).

Bearing in mind, therefore, the transcribed norms of the new Code, the solution to the case presented by our consultant is easy. If the binating or trinating priest is a member of a religious clerical institute of pontifical right or of a clerical society of apostolic life of pontifical right, he is to send the stipends of binated and trinated Masses to his Superior, since his *Major Superior is the Ordinary*. If the binating or trinating priest, however, does not belong to any of these institutes or societies, he has to send the stipend to the *local* Ordinary, his Ordinary being the *local* Ordinary only.

The background for the present legislation on stipends of binated and trinated Masses is as follows: The *local* Ordinaries had been granted by the Holy See the faculty to receive a stipend for bination and trination a long time ago due to the needs of their respective seminaries or due to other diocesan charitable projects. So priests, both secular and religious, who were allowed to binate and trinate had to remit the stipends of said Masses to the diocesan Curia. Likewise, the Supreme Religious Moderators also felt a dire need for financial means to establish and maintain their respective novitiates and houses of studies. Thus, they made a similar request to the Apostolic See, which was individually granted after such need was proven. Hence, their religious priests, who were allowed by the *local* Ordinaries to binate and trinate, had to send the corresponding stipends to their respective religious curia, instead of to the diocesan curia.

During the revision of the Code, all these apostolic concessions were incorporated in the new Code, keeping of course the faculty to binate and trinate as proper to the *local* Ordinaries. The necessity of saying more than one Mass a day arises from the spiritual need of the faithful, whose care is the obligation of the *local* Ordinaries. Thus, we summarize once

again: a) the faculty to say more than one Mass a day is granted by the *local* Ordinary, both to secular and religious priests; b) however, the stipend received for the binated and trinated Masses is to be remitted by the binating and trinating priests to purpose prescribed by their *own* Ordinary in accordance to canon 134.

## 2. THE "RELIGIOUS PROMISES" AFTER THE NOVITIATE

*The Sacred Congregation for Religious and Secular Institutes issued on January 6, 1969 the Instruction RENOVATIONIS CAUSAM, where it was allowed to make religious promises after novitiate instead of making immediately the temporary profession, giving in this way to the novices an opportunity to acquire a greater maturity and to make a firmer decision before becoming members of the Institute. Number 6, 7, 34, 35 and 36 of the said Instruction made reference to this matter. However the new Code of Canon Law does not mention these religious promises, as far as I know. May I ask whether the said religious promises may still be made or whether the new Code does not admit the same?*

*A Major Superior*

It is true that the Instruction *Renovationis causam* was the document which introduced in some religious institutes the *religious promises*, referred to by our consultant, usually made between the novitiate and the religious profession in order to give the novices ample time to reflect more seriously on their religious vocation and to become more mature before making their religious profession.

However, three facts have occurred lately that speak for themselves. *One fact* is the suppression of the *religious promises* in the Ritual of religious profession where it was previously introduced. The *second fact* is the absolute silence of the new Code on the matter; during the revision of the Code the matter of the religious promises was discussed; however, it was decided not to incorporate it in the new Code. The *third fact* is the clear suppression of the *religious promises* ordered by the Sacred Congregation for Religious and Secular Institutes on February 2, 1984.

The reason why the *religious promises* were allowed by the Sacred Congregation was the fact that the novitiate could be made, according to the 1917 Codex at the age of fifteen years and the temporary profession at the age of sixteen years. Enough maturity to make the important decision of becoming member of a religious institute was apparently lacking, sometimes. This defect has been corrected in the new Code. The novitiate now cannot be validly made before the seventeenth year has been completed (can. 643); and for the validity of the temporary profession, the completion of the age of eighteen years is necessary. The new Code, therefore, gives two more years to acquire the maturity to be attained through the *religious promises* allowed by the Instruction *Renovationis causam*.

Accordingly, the Sacred Congregation for the Sacraments and for the Divine Worship issued a decree on September 12, 1983, where some variations or changes to be done in the Liturgical Books according to the new Code of Canon Law were contained. With regards to the Ritual for religious profession, the reference to the *religious promises* was suppressed. Likewise, it was ordered that in the Ritual for temporary profession, the reference to the *religious promises* should be deleted. The rite of *religious promises* was eliminated. The new Code does not mention at all the matter of *religious promises*. Moreover, the Sacred Congregation for Religious and Secular Institutes, which approved the introduction of the *religious promises* before, ordered on February 2, 1984 its suppression by giving some guidelines for cases which could have occurred before by virtue of its previous approval.

It seems, therefore, that *religious promises* cannot be sustained any longer. Their need has been completely solved by the new Code of Canon Law by merely raising the age requirement for the novitiate and religious profession. What reasons can justify them now?



## DOCUMENTATION

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### 1. APPOINTMENT OF MSGR. ERNESTO SALGADO

JOANNES PAULUS EPISCOPUS

Servus Servorum Dei

dilecto Filio ERNESTO SALGADO, e clero saeculari Novae Segobiae, Episcopo Coadiutori Vicarii Apostolici Montani electo atque ad sedem titularem Burunitanam designato, salutem et Apostolicam Benedictionem. Quandoquidem omnes per Ecclesias cura distenditur Nostra, hoc exigente Christo Domino qui apostolicae dignitatis primas Nobis detulit partes, cunctis singularum Communitarum necessitatibus prompto quidem animo consulimus. Quapropter increbrescentibus fidelium postulatis obque territorii amplitudinem, Venerabilis Frater Emilianus Madangeng, Vicarius Apostolicus Montanus cum postulavisset sibi dari adiutorem, Nos, dilecte Fili, scientiam pietatemque tuam iam cognitas habentes, censuimus huius generis ministerium tibi tradi posse. Itaque perspecto Venerabilis Fratris Nostri S. R. E. Cardinalis, Congregationis pro Gentium Evangelizatione seu de Propaganda Fide Praefecti consilio, ex Nostrae Apostolicae potestatis plenitudine, te, Episcopum Coadiutorem cum iure successionis Vicarii Apostolici Montani nominamus pariterque titularem sedem BURUNITANAM certo modo vacantem tibi assignamus, cum muneribus et officiis ad iuris canonici leges. Ubivis praeterea ordinationem episcopalem accipere poteris, salvis, ut par est, omnibus normis liturgicis. Non est obliviscendum dein tuum esse fidei professionem facere atque erga Nos et Successores Nostros ius iurandum nuncupare, iuxta statutas formulas quas ad Congregationem pro Gentium Evangelizatione seu de Propaganda Fide sedulo mittes usitato more signatas sigilloque communitas. Occasione porro capta opportuna, de tua ipsa electione certiores facies tum populum tum clerum quos ut te excipiant debito obsequio ex animo adhortamur. Denique, dilecte Fili, ad hoc opus omnem affectum tuum diligentiamque dirige, ut quod ad concordiam, et quod ad fidelium pertinet bonum, nulla dissensione violetur, nulla desidia negligatur. Datum Romae, apud S. Petrum, die septimo decimo mensis Octobris, anno Domini millesimo nongentesimo octogesimo sexto, Pontificatus Nostri nono.

Joannes Paulus II

Marcellus Rossetti, Protonot. Apost.

## 2. APPOINTMENT OF MSGR. CHRISTIAN NOEL

JOANNES PAULUS EPISCOPUS

Servus Servorum Dei

Venerabili Fratri CHRISTIANO NOEL, hucusque Episcopo titulari Thuccaborensi et Auxiliari Archidioecesis Cagayanae, electo Episcopo Talibonensi, salutem et Apostolicam Benedictionem. Peropportunos est noviter constitutis dioecesibus Pastores dare quam primum, cum initia uniuscuiusque rei, plerumque difficilia, maximam postulent curam; et Nobis quidem cordi est hanc prudentiae pastoralis regulam sequi. Ideo non morandum esse censuimus novae dioecesi Talibonensi prospicere et Episcopum eidem praeficere. Virum autem volentes, qui regeret eam, et virtutibus dotibusque necessariis ornatum et praesertim in gubernandis animis exercitatum, tibi, Venerabilis Frater, munus illud delegare statuimus, qui uti Auxiliaris archidioecesis Cagayanae ostendisti te esse eiusmodi experientiae praeditum. Quapropter, in consilium adhibito Venerabili Fratre Nostro S.R.E. Cardinali Congregationis pro Episcopis Praefecto, Apostolica Nostra usi potestate, his Litteris te Episcopum dioecesis TALIBONENSIS nominamus, renuntiamus, constituimus ad normam iuris communis, solum vinculo titularis Ecclesiae Thuccaborensis et officio Episcopi Auxiliaris, quibus ad hoc tempus obstringebaris. Liberatus etiam obligatione fidei professionem iterandi, ius iurandum tamen dabis fidelitatis erga Nos et Nostros in hac Apostolica Sede Successores; cuius formulam primo quoque tempore ad Congregationem pro Episcopis mittes ex more signatam sigilloque munitam. Videbis praeterea ut clerum et populum dioecesis tuae certiores facias huius tuae nominationis: cognito namque suo Pastori poterunt et in iis obedire, quae praeceperit, et debita pietatis et observantiae officia praestare. Aucta in gregem Dominicum auctoritate auctoque onere. Venerabilis Frater, ne te pigeat in eius assquenda salute totum te impendere, conscios qui tantum munus suscepit non iam ad se pertinere, sed ad eos, quos et voluntas Dei concedit pascendo cibo veritatis, fuciendo vi caritatis, ducendo lumine sapientiae. Datum Romae, apud S. Petrum, die sexto mensis Septembris, anno Domini millesimo nongentesimo octogesimo sexto, Pontificatus Nostri octavo.

Joonnes Paulus II

Marcellus Rossetti, Protonot. Apost.

### 3. APPOINTMENT OF LEONARDO MEDROSO

dilecto filio LEONARDO MEDROSO, hactenus Cancellario Curiae archidioecesis Palensis, Cathedralis Ecclesiae Boronganensis Episcopo electo, salutem et Apostolicam Benedictionem. Quandoquidem beato Petro supra ceteros, cum regni clavibus, universi ovilis Dominici Cura mandatur, idemque Nobis quoque delatum est munus, magna animi intentione destitutis Ecclesiis propios constituimus pastores, qui fidelium gregem ad spiritalia pascua ducant pinguia. Cum igitur dioecesis Boronganensis, cuius postremus Praesul exstitit Venerabilis Frater Nestor C. Cariño, per ipsius electionem ad munus Secretarii Generalis Conferentiae Episcoporum in insulis Philippinis, suo pastore careret, Nos, te, dilecte fili, aptum sensuimus cui ipsa crederetur administranda. De consilio ergo Venerabilium Fratrum Nostrorum S.R.E. Cardinalium Congregatione pro Episcopis praepositorum, pro Apostolicae potestatis atque auctoritatis Nostrae plenitudine, te Episcopum BORONGANENSEM constituimus atque destinamus universis pariter tibi datis iuribus impositisque officiis cunctis quae cum ea dignitate ac pastoralis administratione ad iuris canonici normas cohaeret. Id autem addimus, teneri te, antequam ordinationem episcopalem accipias atque tui muneris in possessionem venias, sive fidei professionem facere, sive erga Nos Nostrosque in hac Sede Apostolica Successores ius iurandum dare, teste aliquo rectae fidei Episcopo, et eorum iurium iurandorum formulas pro consuetudine subsignatas ad congregationem pro Episcopis diligenter mittere. Data vero facultate, fideles tuos paterne monemus, ut non solum te humaniter excipiant, verum etiam mandata tua alacriter exsequantur in Ecclesiae Boronganensis prosperitatem. Extremo, dilecte fili, si quidem qui tibi oneris est auctor, ipse in ministerio est adiutor ac dabit virtutem qui contulit ex quo omnes manant spiritalis vires. Datum Romae, apud S. Petrum, die duodevicesimo mensis Decembris, anno Domini millesimo nongentesimo octogesimo sexto, Pontificatus Nostri nono.

Angelus Lauzoni, Proton. Apost.

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# Dominican Towns in Tarlac

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## PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS

The province of Tarlac was created in 1874 out of a portion of Pampanga and a portion of Pangasinan. The present towns which used to belong to Pampanga are Bamban, Capas, Concepción, La Paz, Victoria and the capital, Tarlac, six in all. They were christianized partly by the Augustinians coming in from Pampanga and partly by the Recollects coming in from Zambales.<sup>1</sup>

The present towns which used to belong to Pangasinan —eleven in all — are Paniqui, Camiling, Gerona, Moncada, Pura, Anao, Santa Ignacia, San Clemente, San Manuel, Mayantoc and Ramos. The first five will be dealt with *ex professo* in the articles that follow, while the remaining six will be touched only in passing. The first five, which originally covered

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<sup>1</sup> This "group of six" is not included in the present series, but will, instead, form part of a history of the Church in "Greater Pampanga" which this writer plans to publish in the near future.

an area that included the present territory of the last six, were founded and evangelized by the Dominicans.

A royal decree dated 30 April 1858 had created what it called "Commandancia Político-Militar de Tarlac." It comprised that part of Pampanga which later became part of what is now Tarlac province.<sup>2</sup>

The *commandancias politico-militares* were the equivalent of the proconsular provinces of the ancient Romans and the *corregimientos* of the sixteenth and seventeenth-century Spaniards. They refer to those regions which were not yet fully pacified and were, therefore, more or less under military protection and control.

## PANIQUEI

### ORIGINS: BARRIO, TOWN AND PARISH

The earliest date about which something certain can be said in connection with Paniquei is the year 1686. That year, the Dominican Order formally accepted it as a *casa*.<sup>3</sup> Now, whether it became a barrio by that formal act of acceptance, or it had been already a barrio before that, is not explicitly stated by the documents. If it is the latter case, who founded it as a barrio?

The annual report of the Dominican Order, at least for the years 1888 through 1896, carries, among other informations, the pertinent dates for each town they were in charge of. In-

<sup>2</sup> Informations contained in this introduction were supplied by the Rev. Pablo Fernández, O.P. See also the footnotes in the articles that follow.

<sup>3</sup> Hilario María Ocio, O.P., *Monumento Dominicano*, MS in APSR, section "Ministerios," vol. 1, p. 119; and Juan Ferrando, O.P., *Estado de la Provincia del Santísimo Rosario en 1848*, MS in AUST, section "Provincia," vol. 10, fol. 20v; *Acta Capitulorum Provincialium Provinciae Sanctissimi Rosarii Philippinarum*, tomus primus, ab anno 1588 ad annum 1698 (Manilae: Typis Collegii Sancti Thomae, 1874).



variably, the year 1686 is placed after the word "Paniqui," under the column *Year Founded* or *Year Started to be Served* (by the Dominicans, that is). Each entry under the latter column begins either with A (meaning "accepted") or with F (meaning "founded"). In the case of Manaoag, for example, the entry is A1608, meaning that it was accepted in 1608 by the Dominicans, but that it had been founded as a *visita* by another party. But in the case of Paniqui, the entry is F1686, meaning that, in 1686, the Dominicans began serving it and simultaneously founded it.<sup>4</sup> There is no known document that questions this point.

Subsequently, during their provincial chapter held on 4 May 1718, the Dominicans raised it to the status of a parish (VICARIA).<sup>5</sup> It seems that this also meant, simultaneously and automatically, its establishment as a town. This can be gathered from a chronicler, Fr. Gregorio Arnaiz, O.P., who says that "this town was founded in 1718 in its present location, with Fr. José Sánchez as its first pastor."<sup>6</sup> What Arnaiz calls "present location" when he was writing is the same "present location" at this writing. The mother-town, of which Paniqui became the daughter-town, was known then as *Telbang*, but is presently known as *Bautista* which is in Pangasinan.<sup>7</sup>

#### PANIQUEI IN 1804

When Paniqui was founded, it was situated west of Tarlac River, near the mountains of Zambales. It was afterwards

<sup>4</sup> *Estado General de los Religiosos y Religiosas* (Manila: Establecimiento tipográfico del Colegio de Santo Tomás), pp. 15-6 for the years 1888-90, and pp. 21-22 for the years 1891-6. The date of the publication is a year after that which is being reported about.

<sup>5</sup> Ferrando, *ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> "La fundación de este pueblo en el lugar que actualmente ocupa data desde 1718, siendo su primer vicario el P. José Sánchez." Gregorio Arnaiz, O.P., *Historia de la Provincia de Nuestra Señora del Rosario*, MS in AUST, tomo 3, no. 33.

<sup>7</sup> Ferrando, *ibid.* See also "Telbang" in this series *Dominican Towns*.

<sup>8</sup> Mora, Manuel, O.P., *Estado de las Casas de la Provincia de Filipinas*, MS in APSR, Section Ministros, Vol. 3, fols. 74v-75.

transferred nearer to the east of the river. Today [1804], it is farther east. It takes one hour to go from there to the river.

#### THE TOWN IN 1851

"Paniqui belongs to the province of Pangasinan and to the Diocese of Nueva Segovia. It has 470 houses, a parish convent, a primary school and a municipal hall which houses the jail. Its ground is plane, its climate temperate. Passing through it are two branches of a river coming from Nueva Ecija. The forests of the northern portion of the town have much timber, excellent for construction, and also for the production of furniture: molave, narra, vanala, acal, and so on. There are also fruit trees: coconuts, mangoes, oranges (*cajeles*, *naranjitas*), lemons, tamarinds, cacao and coffee. There are also cotton trees. While the road connecting this town with the capital is alright, the streets in the poblacion are poor for pedestrians and for those riding on horseback. There is a daily mail to the capital and a weekly mail coming in from it. Paniqui produces abundant rice. Her principal industry is the buying and selling of textiles (*telas*) and the raising of horses, cows and carabaos. The cemetery is outside the *población*, in a well ventilated area. The population is 2,900, out of whom 713 are taxpayers."<sup>9</sup>

#### THE TOWN IN 1869

Fr. Ramón Suarez, O.P., made the following observations in his chronicle written in 1869:

"Paniqui is an old town. How come that this town, which is more than a hundred years old, is so backward? I mean it does not have public buildings like the more recent ones. For

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<sup>9</sup> Manuel Buzeta and Felipe Bravo (ed.), *Diccionario Geográfico-Estadístico-Histórico de las Islas Filipinas*, (Madrid, 1851), p. 390.

example, its own daughter-town, Gerona, which is not yet thirty years old, already has them. This clearly points to a [long disparaging remark about] the natives of Paniqui. It also casts a shadow on the priests who have administered it to date.

"The Holy Scripture says: 'Like people, like priests.' With due deference to the sacred texts, we can reverse that sentence in the case of the Philippines: like priest, like people. This is what one can see in the towns of the *indios*. If the pastor gets up early in the morning, the indio gets up early. If the priest drinks liquor, the indio imitates him, so as not to be left behind. If the priest gambles, the entire town gambles. This can be said of all the towns of the *indios*, but it applies more specifically to Paniqui and its priests. Of course, to every rule there is an exception, but today, alibis are no longer as acceptable as they used to be... All its neighbors — Bayambang, Camiling, and above all, its former barrio, Gerona — accuse it.

"Paniqui is on a ground that is open, plane and low. Lying south and southeast of it is Gerona; northeast is Cuyapo (a former barrio of Paniqui and now a town of Nueva Ecija); west, with inclination to the south, is Camiling; west, with inclination to the north, is Bayambang; and north is Mangabol, which therefore makes it possible for Paniqui to have as its neighbors Malasiqui and Villasis, but in between would be Agno River and an immense distance.

"This is Paniqui, which has already two daughter-towns [Gerona and Cuyapo], and what is happening to her is like what happened to its patron, Mr. Araña... It has a wide area and a large population and yet does not yet have principal edifices. The Ilocanos are coming in crowds to settle there up to Mangabol, where they already have two barrios: San Ramón and Añao, and the original natives of Paniqui, pure Pangasinans, are not eager to work and do not know how to harness

the Ilocano energy. Whether it is out of pride or whatever, they don't seem to be willing to mix with other ethnic groups. It reminds one of what is said about Captain Araña, that he is left in the shore while watching his ship go, that is, the land and the people... because those of Anao are preparing to separate themselves and form their own town.

"The present population of Paniqui (that is, the taxpayers) is a little over 2,300. Of these, around 700 to 800, the original inhabitants, pure Pangasinans, are in the center, that is, within an area reached by the sound of the church bell. The rest are scattered through the barrios of Anao, San Ramón, Barang, etc., and are mostly Ilocano immigrants either from the Ilocos region or fugitives (*prófugos*) from the towns which they had founded in Pangasinan. The town proper of Paniqui is of medium size. The church and convent are made of wood, with wooden posts (*arigues*) and roofs made of anahaw leaves."<sup>10</sup>

#### SHIFTING OF BOUNDARIES

The immediate neighbor-towns of Paniqui in the north were Bayambang (in 1851) and Malasiqui and Villasís (in 1869). Today, they are the towns of Moncada and Anao, which, during those years, were still within the territory of Paniqui as barrios San Ramón and Anao. If one moves counterclockwise from the western corner of the south of Paniqui up to the eastern corner of the north, its immediate neighbors in 1869 were Gerona and Cuyapo, while at present, they are Gerona, Pura and Ramos (three towns of Tarlac province). The neighbors of Paniqui in the west were Camiling and (above Camiling) Bayambang, while at present they are Camiling and (below Camiling), Sta. Ignacia. In short, Paniqui used to share boundaries with two provinces (Pangasinan and Nueva Ecija), but at present it shares boundaries only with towns which, like itself, belong to the province of Tarlac.

<sup>10</sup> *Descripción de los pueblos de Pangasinán*, MSS in APSR, Section "Pangasinan," vol. 7, doc. 15a, fols. 197v-198.

## CONSTRUCTION AND CHURCH PROPERTIES

The earliest year during which a church building is reported to have been existing in Paniqui is 1804. Now, as to whether this was the first, and as to when it was constructed, the available sources do not say anything. Wrote Fr. Manuel Mora in 1804: "The church and convent of Paniqui are of wood, both large and in their line not bad. The first body of the facade is of brick, and the other two of *dindin* Pampango up to the roof."<sup>11</sup>

Another one is reported to have been built in 1874 or thereabouts by Fr. Ulpiano Sanz, pastor of Paniqui from 1874 to 1887. It was 53.5 meters long and 20 meters wide. It had three naves. Its walls were made of galvanized iron, and its posts were of strong wood. It is described as "beautiful."<sup>12</sup>

Earlier in 1873, Fr. Raimundo Díaz Villabella (together with his assistant, Fr. Félix Casas) began building a convent made of bricks. The construction was completed by Fr. Sanz. Among other things, he changed the original nipa roof into galvanized iron.<sup>13</sup>

Fr. Domingo Andrés, pastor of this town from 1890 to 1898, made further improvements on the two buildings. He had the church painted, a big visiting room added in the convent, and the upper floor of the latter enlarged. He "updated" the old stairs by placing iron grills there. Also, he built a cemetery with an iron gate and a chapel inside, and constructed two schoolhouses, one for boys.<sup>14</sup>

The same Fr. Andrés reports that during his incumbency as pastor of Paniqui, this local church owned: (1) a big lot where the church and convent stood; (2) a cemetery surrounded by a concrete fence (*cercado de piedra*), with a chapel inside, in the eastern side, of the convent; (3) a parcel of land around

<sup>11</sup> Mora, *ibid.*, Ocio, *ibid.*, and María y Morales, *ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> Arnaiz, *ibid.* Notice that Ocio, who lived up to 1903, says that Paniqui did not yet have a decent church, "*carece aún de iglesia decente*".

<sup>13</sup> Marín y Morales, *ibid.*; and Ocio, *Compendio*, pp. 986 and 1036.

<sup>14</sup> Marín y Morales, *ibid.*



1½ kilometers south of the town, at the right side of the road which goes to Gerona, which used to be the site of a cemetery; (4) another parcel, in that area, also formerly a cemetery; and (5) west of the convent and church, a large parcel of land, which used to be the site of the old church and convent.

He adds that, in this last-mentioned place, he allowed several houses to be built on condition that the tenants would pay a small fee annually to the church. They agreed, and some of them paid to him religiously. He notes, finally, that these lots were properly measured by a certified geodetic engineer (*perito agrimensor*) and that the plans were sent to the bishop by Fr. Eduardo Samaniego, vicar forane of [illegible] in the province of Tarlac.<sup>15</sup>

#### CONCLUDING NOTES

Among the Dominican ministries in the Philippines during the Spanish era was the territory that stretched from Bayombong in Nueva Vizcaya to Cauayan in Isabela and was inhabited by the ethnic group known as the *Gaddangs*. It was referred to as "Misiones de Paniqui." This old province of Paniqui must not be mistaken for the present town of Paniqui in Tarlac province. They are two different things.<sup>16</sup> It is the latter that this essay is all about.

This town (and parish) is closely associated with at least two important events: the baptism of the sultan of Jolo (Ali Mudin), and the beginnings of the Aglipayan schism. They are not included in this article, due to lack of time and space, but will form part of a book which the Dominicans will hopefully publish in the near future about *Dominican Towns* in Central Luzon.

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<sup>15</sup> MS in APSR, tomo 7, doc. 34, fols. 8-8v.

<sup>16</sup> Information personally given to this writer by Rev. Fr. Pablo Fernández, O.P.

## HOMILIES FOR OCTOBER AND NOVEMBER

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### Truth Hurts

MATTHEW 21:33-43

*27th SUNDAY,  
ORDINARY TIME,  
YEAR A,  
OCTOBER 4, 1987*

**L**ET each one of us now answer for himself or herself these personal questions: Why have we come for Mass today? Fundamentally, why? Is habit the main reason? A guilt complex, perhaps? How sincere are we, really? Do we go to Mass chiefly to fulfill a precept? Or make a petition? Are we profoundly aware that to assemble for the Eucharist on the Lord's Day is to witness to our total commitment to the Lord; to confess that Jesus is Lord, and to embrace Him as He comes again into our midst to heal and encourage and feed us; to steel ourselves to imitate Christ and thereby render our homes and environments more Christlike?

While we search to answer truthfully those personal questions, let us consider some points offered to us in the parable of today's Gospel. This parable tells us a lot about God and us, and about Christ.

The parable says that the owner of vineyard, after entrusting it to the cultivators, did not stand over them to exercise police-like supervision. He went away and left them with their task. See how God pays us the compliment of trusting us. Every task we receive is a task given to us by God.

When the owner's messenger had been abused and maltreated, he did not come with sudden vengeance. He gave the cultivators chance after chance to respond to his appeal, by sending messenger after messenger. We see the magnanimous patience of God who bears with men in their sinning and will not cast them off.

However, in the end the owner of the vineyard took the vineyard from the cultivators and gave it to others. Let us here consider that God's sternest judgment is when he takes out of our hands the task which He meant us to do. A man has sunk to his lowest level when he has become useless to God.

In spite of or because of the great human freedom and privilege God has given us, we cannot escape our human answerability. To all men comes a day of reckoning. We are answerable for the way in which we have carried out the task God gave us to do.

We have considered the truth about God's goodness and love in trusting us, in giving us freedom, in being patient with us. But let us not set aside the truth that God demands and deserves a response to his goodness and love.

That response means a complete change in life, a way of acting that is different. When this truth makes us face our own failures and inadequacies and our own need for change, we put up defenses. The simplest is to ignore or deny the truth. When a teacher, for example, inform irresponsible parents that their child is a scholastic and a disciplinary problem in school, that evaluation is a judgment of the parents as well as the child. Rather than face their own failure and the need to do something about the child, the parents take the easy way out and reject the teacher's report.

The teaching of Jesus is really very demanding, even frightening. Have we really listened to it, or have we put up our defenses? Real listening means nothing less than constantly

admitting that we have not yet put into practice what we profess or believe. Jesus taught us to take up our cross and follow Him. Who wants to give up comfort and pleasure to take up a cross of illness, or loneliness, or frustration? The cross seems a crazy approach to life.

Jesus taught us to fraternally correct the faults of others. Well, just try it and you will see that it never works anyway. As for the business of forgiving and forgetting the wrong they have done you, that is fine for someone who has not really been deeply hurt to talk about.

Are we listening to the teaching of Jesus or have we dismissed it as impractical or irrelevant, or as directed to others but not to us? If we let His teaching come through, we open ourselves to the possibility of having to change our lives.

The truth can hurt, even the truth preached by Jesus. His truth demands that we be different from others; it requires that we accept suffering and self-denial, and that we abandon our selfishness to be generous in our love and service to God and our fellow men.

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## Everybody Is Invited

MATTHEW 22:1-14 or 22:1-10

*28th SUNDAY,  
ORDINARY TIME,  
YEAR A,  
OCTOBER 11, 1987*

**I**f there is something clear in the parable of today's Gospel, it is that the hunger we have for God is nothing compared to the hunger God has for us.

Another thing that is obvious: that God's invitation to the banquet does not attract us very much; it does not make us happy. That is why we look for excuses which we ourselves are not convinced of, but which serves the purpose of not attending the banquet.

We delay our encounter with God: after I get married and settled, after my children have finished schooling, after my old age retirement... and so we go on giving out reasons.

There are also some who have not thought of going to the banquet, because the truth is that they do not know what is heaven or grace or Jesus Christ. These are the people who never had any religious instruction; they have not even once gone to a catechism class... and all this is completely strange to them.

And there are those who have their own banquets. These are the people who live in luxury. Thus they do not need religion. They are self-sufficient since life has been good to them, overflowing them with its various bonanzas. In this external abundance they hardly perceive their inner emptiness. One banquet, one party follows another. There are long week-end celebrations lasting till the early morning hours of Sunday and such activities make attendance at Mass difficult, if not impossible. These people do not really have anything against religion, but they can get along without it. Material riches stifle any higher religious aspirations.

Then come those who are very occupied and busy, and therefore have no time to answer God's call. Time is gold; it is money. And thus even the Sunday must be used to contact business friends and prepare for the work of the week. They think that religion, this banquet is good for women and children and, of course, for older people. Once old, they will attend to it. But right now the demands of one's profession take one's whole time and energy. So the Lord has to excuse this.



The parable tells us of some who "grabbed the servants, beat them and killed them." These people do not respect the king. Their action is open rebellion. They are militant atheists, haters of Christianity. Religion is for them not something indifferent, but opium for the people, a hindrance for the rise of mankind. Thus they attack or exploit or manipulate Christianity wherever and whenever they can.

In the parable the king answers swiftly and destroys their city — a metaphor for the great reckoning of Christ at the last judgment.

Today's parable is also applicable to the Holy Eucharist we are celebrating right here and now. The Eucharist is in a form of a banquet. The Eucharist is the synthesis of the Kingdom already present in the celebration of the Holy Mass and the Kingdom to come.

Compared to our human experience of a banquet, the Kingdom suggests friendship, fellowship, communion — to meet with the people you love. Therefore, the Kingdom is communion of people and God, and of people among themselves. This deep love in communion, which is in the nature of heaven, should begin in our earthly experience in our celebration of the Holy Eucharist, in our membership in the Church.

And as the parable states, everybody is invited to the banquet, to the Holy Eucharist, and ponder upon the words of the priest when he holds high the Sacred Host: "This is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. Happy are those who are called to His supper."

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# To God What Is God's

MATTHEW 22:15-21

*29th SUNDAY,  
ORDINARY TIME,  
YEAR A,  
OCTOBER 18, 1987*

**T**oday is WORLD MISSION SUNDAY. Some in the audience will probably exclaim: "Bah! Same as last year and all the years, the same topic, the same discussions, the same appeal." So, let us better discuss the Gospel reading.

The Gospel says: "Give to Caesar the things that are Caesar's; and to God, the things that are God's." This was Jesus' reply to the problem posed to Him by His enemies who did not, in the first place, hope that Jesus would solve to the satisfaction of everyone. By posing the problem, all they wanted was to trick Jesus by means of a dilemma so they could get rid of Him. A simple reply that taxes should be paid would have made Jesus look like a traitor to God. A simple denial would have left Him open to the danger of being denounced to the Romans as a seditionist.

Does this Gospel have any application today? Well, you can look at any coin in your pocket or bag and see that the inscription on one side says "Republika ng Pilipinas". Since we enjoy benefits from our government, we owe taxes. But whether you think taxes are just or not, whether you approved of the way the government is using the money or not, you will still have to pay taxes. The Bureau of Internal Revenue will

see to that, as well as the merchant who simply will not sell you anything without collecting the sales tax.

We are really going to "give to Caesar what is Caesar's," no matter what we think about its propriety. But what about the admonition Jesus added: "Give to God what is God's"?

Very seriously, the point we all need to be concerned with today is that we give to God what is God's. Next Sunday you will hear Jesus say in the Gospel: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind." To put it another way, *everything* belongs to God: our bodies, our souls, our talents, our time, even our treasures. It takes a lifelong, constant effort to give to God what is His. And it is a supreme obligation in conscience of which we must be frequently reminded. God will not force us to give Him His due, for He wants a loving service that is freely given from the conviction of faith, of the faith we embraced more than four centuries ago by the grace of God and the efforts of the missionaries.

Today, World Mission Sunday, we come in faith before God to offer ourselves completely to Him in union with the Risen Lord Jesus present in this Holy Eucharist.

We, in the Philippines, have been Christians for more than four hundred years. We celebrate the Eucharistic Sacrifice daily. But do we really and authentically experience the presence of the Risen Lord as individuals, as a community, as a nation?

Why is it that this experience of the Risen Lord did not create a vigorous, dynamic missionary movement in our country among our people, among our youth, even among our priests?

Is it because we do not really experience the Eucharistic presence of the Lord that we are not dynamic missionaries on

one hand and on the other hand, we are not dynamic missionaries so we do not experience the Lord's presence?

Today, we are asked to help the Missions by our prayers, our sacrifices and our alms. Let us give generously. By so doing, we are giving to God what is God's.

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## Like Alcohol in the Wine

MATTHEW 22:34-40

*30th SUNDAY,  
ORDINARY TIME,  
YEAR A,  
OCTOBER 29, 1987*

One could wonder why a "teacher of the Law" would ask Jesus a very elementary question which any of our school-children knows: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and the most important commandment."

But if you are aware that the Jews had 248 positive commandments and 365 prohibitions, you will understand the question: "Which is the greatest commandment in the Law?"

Jesus answered: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your mind." But, without being asked, Jesus, on his own, added: "Love your neighbor as you love yourself."

The truly original of the answer Jesus given is that it shows the intimate union, the unity, yes, the inseparability of the two commandments. Whoever tries to separate in his life the love of God from the love of neighbor is like one who wants to separate alcohol from wine.

Jesus explicitly states that the total love of God and love of neighbor are the summary of the will of God. Jesus distinguishes the two loves. Their object is different. God is not man, man is not God. Both are very important although the love of God takes the first place.

Love of neighbor takes second place although it is "similar" to love of God. This means the two loves cannot be separated. Love of God is the source of love of neighbor, and love of neighbor is the expression of love of God.

The first commandment — Jesus goes to say — cannot be fulfilled if the second is not fulfilled. And it is not possible to fulfill the second without fulfilling the first. It is like a cross which cannot exist without the two bars: the vertical (love for God) and the horizontal (love for neighbor).

Even as the cross is the sign of Christianity, the inseparable unity of the two loves is the brand of Christianity. It unifies prayer and service to others, contemplation and commitment, religious practice and social involvement.

The originality of Jesus' reply consists in that He made one single commandment out of the two, because once God became man in Jesus Christ, it remains impossible to love God without loving man at the same time. And this is what Jesus wants to say when, in giving the definitive sentence at the Last Judgment, He gives out the reason: "I was hungry and you fed me... I tell you, whenever you did this for one of the least important of these brothers of mine, you did it to me."



We have to love this neighbor who make God present to us. You must love him "as you love yourself." We have to love ourselves and wish ourselves everything good, because if to his own self one is bad, to whom can he ever be good? No one who does not love and accept his own self, is ever capable of loving and accepting his neighbor.

And who is the neighbor? Neighbor is one who is near or close to you. Your neighbor is your husband, your wife, the people next door, your co-employees... For a Christian every man is his neighbor, no matter what his race is, or religion, ideological thinking or political stand. Every person in need is my neighbor.

But why do we have to love him? Because God loves him. He is a child of God, even the poor, the depressed, the oppressed.

We can then say with all certainty that man is the sacrament of God in this world, that is, he is where to encounter God.

Let us convince ourselves of this and pray that we be able to fulfill these commandments of love, so that this Holy Eucharist we are now celebrating will have meaning for us.

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## Models to be Imitated

MATTHEW 23:1-12a

*SOLEMNITY OF ALL SAINTS,  
31st SUNDAY,  
ORDINARY TIME,  
YEAR A,  
NOVEMBER 1, 1987*

**A**s everybody here knows, we are now celebrating the feast of All Saints. Now, what is a saint?

A saint is one who is officially recognized by the Catholic Church as having attained an outstanding degree of holiness in this life and the blessed vision of the Trinity in heaven. The term is sometimes used in a wider sense to mean any person of extraordinary holiness, and St. Paul applied it to all his fellow Christians. Today, however, it generally applies to one who has been officially declared by the Church to have attained heaven. This official declaration is, in modern times, preceded by the judicial processes of beatification and canonization and is reserved to the Holy See.

A good number of you must have been aware of the processes towards the elevation to the ranks of Saints of the first Filipino, San LORENZO DE MANILA. San Lorenzo was first beatified on February 18, 1981 here in Manila. He was canonized in Rome only last October 18.

The precise number of saints is not definitely known, but the Roman Martyrology contains over 5,000 entries. Many of these entries refer to two or more saints with the same name.

*Characteristics of Saintliness.* Marvelous favors and astonishing miracles are often found in the lives of the saints, but it is their sanctity, not their works, that is of the greatest significance. The Church presents the saints to the faithful not for the admiration of their miracles, but for the imitation of their holiness. The sanctity of a servant of God must be outstanding before the Church will propose him as a model to be imitated.

Pope Benedict XIV gave an excellent description of the characteristics of perfect sanctity: (1) The saint does not hesitate to perform even difficult works for God, such as meekness under severe insult or a life of perfect chastity. (2) Virtuous acts are performed whenever occasion calls for them, in accordance with a person's age, condition, and state in life. Thus, a

married person is not required to preach the gospel, whereas a priest is. (3) The virtuous act is carried out promptly and with a certain ease. A perfect soul does not delay in doing God's will. (4) The saint finds abundant joy in doing his duty and in suffering greatly for the love of God. The apostles, after being beaten by their persecutors, left "rejoicing that they had been counted worthy to suffer disgrace for the name of Jesus." (5) In doing God's will the saint is constant and persevering; he does not change in faithfulness from day to day. (6) Last of all, perfect holiness shines with all the virtues, even those that seem opposed to each other: humility and magnanimity, justice and mercy, fortitude and meekness. The saint, therefore, is a remarkable example of likeness to Christ which the Church proposes for imitation by others.

Now, as we go on day by day, have we ever thought of imitating the Saints? Have we ever asked ourselves: what would St. so-and-so do if he or she were in my place? Do you know the life of your namesake, your *kapangalan na santo*, the saint whose name was given to you at baptism, and whose name you carry today? How many times in your life have you called on your namesake and tried to imitate your *kapangalan na santo*?

Do you have a saint of your devotion, whom you pray to for guidance and intercession? Is there an image of a saint in your room? Do you try to follow his/her footsteps? What saint do you honor with novena-prayers every month or every year? Do you not invoke a saint in your morning and night prayers? Could our first Filipino saint LORENZO DE MANILA, be the saint of your devotion?

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# Required Oil Supply

MATTHEW 25:1-13

32nd SUNDAY,  
ORDINARY TIME,  
YEAR A,  
NOVEMBER 8, 1987

**T**he wedding celebration from which the Gospel parable draws inspiration, is not familiar to us Filipinos.

The bridesmaids who are the "stars" of the story, do not accompany any bride, but wait for the bridegroom to come; and at a certain point, they — all ten of them — fall asleep. The bridegroom is very late (it looks like a dull and disorganized wedding). Finally, the bridegroom makes an ill-timed appearance, right at midnight, when apparently no one expected him any more: and even more oddly, precisely at midnight, the shop attendants were at their counters to attend to the foolish bridesmaids. At the end, the late-coming bridegroom becomes some kind of a *portero*, a doorkeeper, who answers the knock at the door, but rejects those who come late (there is not much celebration or politeness). These and other strange events of the story, are only parabolic elements, chosen for the sake of the teaching they are meant to convey.

Taking all this into consideration, the situation of the slow-bridesmaids-being-locked-out is not so much of a problem. But the attitude of the bridegroom is. The groom represents Christ. And the wedding banquet is heaven. His reaction is hardly filled with "Christian" pity. To bar the careless from a ban-

quet is a small thing. To bar them from a joyful eternity is something very serious.

But evidently Christ intends the lesson to be painfully clear. When it is a matter of the Second Coming of Christ and entrance into the heavenly kingdom, the criterion would not be pity, not *hiya* nor *pakikisama*, but justice. We either have what it takes, or we cannot come in. So often we are tempted to say there couldn't be hell. God would not be that mean. But the simple fact is that God the Father does not and would not choose hell for us. We have to do this for ourselves. Anyone who goes to hell is not forced. He has to buy his own ticket, get on the boat and go. You have to want to go to hell to get there.

Now, the characterization of the bridesmaids as wise or foolish is quite relevant. It is, after all, the criterion for choice.

Both "wise" and "foolish" are sapiential terms: wisdom is that quality or combination of qualities that makes someone successful in life; foolishness is the lack of those qualities or the presence of shortcomings that lead to a lack of success, to failure.

In a religious context, wisdom is the ability to please God, and thus, to reach one's eternal goal; foolishness is the opposite.

Wisdom and foolishness are not related to falling asleep (all the bridesmaids fell asleep); this is just a descriptive element that brings out that the bridegroom comes "at midnight", when he is not expected. Wisdom and foolishness are related to oil, to having or not having oil — it is oil that the parable is all about.

The lamp is the symbol of one's own person and life. The oil that feeds one's Christian life, one's Christian personality is the living according to the Gospel. No doubt, it includes a reference to the "anointing" of the Spirit in baptism, whose



presence in the Christian person is the guarantee of a good Christian life. It is of decisive importance to be in possession of such oil when the bridegroom/judge comes; and his coming may happen at any time of one's life, even "at midnight", when one least expect that anything may happen.

On the other hand, the oil is a strictly personal possession. It cannot be given to others. No one can expect to obtain it from somebody else. This is why the wise bridesmaids refuse to share what they have, they just cannot. So one must be in possession of good Christian living at all times. If something happens "at midnight", and one has run out of oil, it may be too late to get some more. Please note that the foolish bridesmaids are said to have gone for oil, but it is not said that they were able to buy any. It is then a matter of "readiness". It is in view of this readiness — with abundant supply of oil — that the Lord earnestly warns everyone: "Watch out, then, because you do not know the day or the hour".

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## To be a Totally Developed Person

MATTHEW 25:14-30

*33rd SUNDAY,  
ORDINARY TIME,  
YEAR A,  
NOVEMBER 15, 1987*

HOMILIES 515

**T**oday's Gospel is one of the least known parables of Jesus. It can be called the Parable of Responsibility.

God (who is represented by the man who was about to leave home on a trip) distributes his gifts to each and every human being. Of course, to some He gives more and to others less.

Gifts or "talents" are all that which we need to accomplish the task God has assigned us to do on earth. This task is, above all, to totally develop in ourselves a truly human person.

To do this the Lord granted us a whole series of natural gifts: intelligence, temper, style of being, behavior, charm, etc... These are gifts which we possess, shall we say, in a rough state, but which we have to develop and make perfect.

It is not easy to become a person. And in fact to achieve a mature personality, well-rounded, balanced, with full control of oneself... is something that is not given for free and requires no little effort and a lot of enthusiasm. To be a totally developed man or woman is something no one of us should ever give up. And therefore we must put all our talents to work and let them grow and produce.

We lament that the world is going bad, that there is much violence and sex, drugs and graft and corruption, so much injustice and poverty, depression and oppression, lying and cheating... we say that any day we are going to destroy everyone and everything... but is it because it cannot be otherwise? If the marvelous development of science and technology is not accompanied by total development of the human person, we will end up with someone so irresponsible as to launch a deadly bomb over all humanity.

In our world today there are people who are not persons, but — as Luther King said — "genuine gorillas carrying a gun".

This is what God gives all of us first: the capacity to become persons, but we have to put the means towards it. And here a decisive role is played by the kind of education we have received in our youth and infancy. We should indeed help pray that parents give their children the opportunity to become totally developed human persons.

We often envy the talents of others. We think that the Lord has not been fair to us, because He has not made us as intelligent as our companions, nor has He given us the wealth of our next door neighbor nor the physical fitness of our friends.

It is certain that all of us, absolutely all, have plenty of talents. Not in vain has it been said that "in man there is much more worthy of admiration than of scorn." Nobody comes into this world without being equipped with all that is necessary to make himself a person and a son of God. That some have received more than I did, does not mean that I do not have what is needed to accomplish my task.

What really matters is not the number of talents we possess, but how we make them fruitful. It would not be bad at all if during this Eucharistic celebration we come to think for a moment about what we have done with, let's say, our personal charm. Do we use it to do good and make people happy? Or we have it practically lying idle because it has been of no use? Or do I use it to do evil?

Now, if the Lord in the parable punished the lazy servant who has done nothing wrong, but did not do anything good, what will happen to those who employ their God-given talents to do wrong?

Let us ask the Lord for the grace to take our life and responsibility seriously, taking into account not so much what we are now doing but what we are capable of being. Let us fervently hope that, at the end, the Lord will say to us: "Come on in and share my happiness." Amen.

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# Suffering Establishes Brotherhood

MATTHEW 25:31-46

*SOLEMNITY OF CHRIST THE KING  
OF THE UNIVERSE,  
YEAR A,  
NOVEMBER 22, 1987*

**T**oday's Gospel reading opens with the words of Jesus Christ who said: "When the Son of Man comes as King and all the angels with Him, He will sit on His royal throne, and the people of all the nations will be gathered before Him."

"Son of Man" is a messianic title deriving from the Old Testament; it portrays Christ as sovereign judge and ruler over the entire universe and, therefore, over man and man's History, which also explains why He is called "The King" absolutely.

The Gospel now gives us the scene of the last judgment. By then the absolute power of the Son of Man appears, not just in His splendid display, with all the angels around Him who is seated "on His royal throne", but, first of all, in the fact that He seals the eternal fate of the whole of mankind. There is no appeal against His sentence. And His sentence means eternal happiness or eternal punishment; it means the final, encompassing, scrutinizing and evaluating look at centuries and millenia of human history; a look at all the accomplishments and failures of the human race, but also at every single deed of

every single individual. This is the last and final evaluation of man's actions, projects, etc. — and the only one that counts.

Another great message of the Gospel of today is this. Jesus declared that when He comes in glory, He will judge us on how we have treated Him as He is found in his brothers. He emphatically stated: "I tell you, whenever you did this for one of the least important of these brothers, you did it for Me!"

These words are indeed mysterious, but they are very true. There is no reason to water down this truth: Jesus somehow is really present in our fellow human beings, even in those in whom we might least expect to find Him.

When you come to think about it, those in need have even some kind of a right to be helped by us. I do not mean a right in the strict sense of justice, as a man has a right to a day's pay for a day's work. It is a right without a special name, without any technical term. It is a right based on the fact that Jesus lives within others, especially in the needy.

You surely know that, whatever we have, we hold in trust as stewards; it all belongs to Jesus. When He asks for help in His unfortunate brethren, He is only asking for what belongs to Him.

We have to stop thinking exclusively of our own rights. We must soberly listen to the words of Jesus: "I was hungry but you did not feed me, thirsty but you would not give me a drink; I was a stranger but you would not welcome me in your homes; naked but you would not clothe me; I was sick and in prison but you would not take care of me."

And watch out if ever it comes to your mind to protest by saying: "When, Lord, did we ever see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and we would not help you?", because to your protest Jesus, the King, will answer: "I tell you, whenever you refused to help one of these least important ones, you refused to help Me."



It is those who are hungry, thirsty, homeless, naked and sick whom Christ calls "my brothers". Even deserved suffering establishes brotherhood with Christ, who declared: "I was in prison". All who suffer, all who are outcast, are Christ's brothers, because He, better than anyone else, knew what suffering was, what contempt and what being an outcast meant. Those who suffer share His own fate, His own life, His own sorrow, His own helplessness and His own powerlessness before human arrogance, carelessness and overbearance.

Communion in suffering generates unbreakable bonds; it is this communion that binds Christ with those who suffer whom He regards as "His brothers". This is why He is so grateful to those who show mercy to those who are in distress. Remember how Jesus Himself rewarded with "His company in Paradise" the thief who felt compassion for Him on the cross at Calvary.

On this feast of Christ the King, we must once again recognize His absolute and universal sovereignty, and His presence within our fellow human beings, particularly in those who are least important.

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